





Jeannette Watson
with love from
M. H. Dill

One of Marys books

POEMS

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

HENRY ALTEMUS

PHILADELPHIA

POEMS



WILLIAM
CULLEN
BRYANT

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THE AGES.

WHEN to the common rest that crowns our
days,
Called in the noon of life, the good man goes,
Or full of years, and ripe in wisdom, lays
His silver temples in their last repose ;
When, o'er the buds of youth, the death-wind
blows,
And blights the fairest ; when our bitterest
tears
Stream, as the eyes of those that love us
close,
We think on what they were, with many fears
Lest goodness die with them, and leave the
coming years.

And therefore, to our hearts, the days gone
by—
When lived the honored sage whose death
we wept,
And the soft virtues beamed from many an
eye,

And beat in many a heart that long has
slept—
Like spots of earth where angel-feet have
stepped—
Are holy; and high-dreaming bards have
told
Of times when worth was crowned, and faith
was kept,
Ere friendship grew a snare, or love waxed
cold—
Those pure and happy times—the golden days
of old.

Peace to the just man's memory,—let it grow
Greener with years, and blossom through the
flight
Of ages; let the mimic canvas show
His calm benevolent features; let the light
Stream on his deeds of love, that shunned
the sight
Of all but heaven, and, in the book of fame,
The glorious record of his virtues write,
And hold it up to men, and bid them claim
A palm like his, and catch from him the hal-
lowed flame.

But oh, despair not of their fate who rise
To dwell upon the earth when we withdraw:

Lo! the same shaft by which the righteous
dies,
Strikes through the wretch that scoffed at
mercy's law,
And trode his brethren down, and felt no
awe
Of Him who will avenge them. Stainless
worth,
Such as the sternest age of virtue saw,
Ripens, meanwhile, till time shall call it forth
From the low modest shade, to light and bless
the earth.

Has Nature in her calm, majestic march,
Faltered with age at last? does the bright sun
Grow dim in heaven? or, in their far blue
arch,
Sparkle the crowd of stars, when day is done,
Less brightly? when the dew-lipped Spring
comes on,
Breathes she with airs less soft, or scents the
sky
With flowers less fair than when her reign
began?
Does prodigal Autumn, to our age, deny
The plenty that once swelled beneath his sober
eye?

Look on this beautiful world, and read the
truth
In her fair page ; see, every season brings
New change, to her, of everlasting youth ;
Still the green soil, with joyous living things,
Swarms, the wide air is full of joyous wings,
And myriads, still, are happy in the sleep
Of ocean's azure gulfs, and where he flings
The restless surge. Eternal Love doth keep
In his complacent arms, the earth, the air, the
deep.

Will then the merciful One, who stamped
our race
With his own image, and who gave them
sway
O'er earth, and the glad dwellers on her face,
Now that our flourishing nations far away
Are spread, where'er the moist earth drinks
the day,
Forget the ancient care that taught and
nursed
His latest offspring ? will he quench the ray
Infused by his own forming smile at first,
And leave a work so fair all blighted and ac-
cursed ?

Oh, no! a thousand cheerful omens give
Hope of yet happier days whose dawn is
nigh.

He who has tamed the elements, shall not live
The slave of his own passions; he whose eye
Unwinds the eternal dances of the sky,
And in the abyss of brightness dares to span
The sun's broad circle, rising yet more high,
In God's magnificent works his will shall
scan—

And love and peace shall make their paradise
with man.

Sit at the feet of History—through the night
Of years the steps of virtue she shall trace,
And show the earlier ages, where her sight
Can pierce the eternal shadows o'er their
face;—

When from the genial cradle of our race,
Went forth the tribes of men, their pleasant
lot

To choose, where palm-groves cooled their
dwelling place,

Or freshening rivers ran; and there forget
The truth of heaven, and kneeled to gods that
heard them not.

Then waited not the murderer for the night,
But smote his brother down in the bright day,
And he who felt the wrong, and had the
 might,
His own avenger, girt himself to slay ;
Beside the path the unburied carcass lay ;
The shepherd, by the fountains of the glen,
Fled, while the robber swept his flock away
And slew his babes. The sick, untended
 then,
Languished in the damp shade, and died afar
 from men.

But misery brought in love—in passion's
 strife
Man gave his heart to mercy pleading long,
And sought out gentle deeds to gladden life ;
The weak, against the sons of spoil and
 wrong,
Banded, and watched their hamlets, and
 grew strong.
States rose, and, in the shadow of their might,
The timid rested. To the reverent throng,
Grave and time-wrinkled men, with locks all
 white,
Gave laws, and judged their strifes, and taught
 the way of right ;

Till bolder spirits seized the rule, and nailed
On men the yoke that man should never
bear,

And drove them forth to battle: Lo! un-
veiled

The scene of those stern ages! What is
there?

A boundless sea of blood, and the wild air
Moans with the crimson surges that entomb
Cities and bannered armies; forms that wear
The kingly circlet, rise amid the gloom,
O'er the dark wave, and straight are swallowed
in its womb.

Those ages have no memory—but they left
A record in the desert—columns strown
On the waste sands, and statues fall'n and
cleft,

Heaped like a host in battle overthrown;
Vast ruins, where the mountain's ribs of stone
Were hewn into a city; streets that spread
In the dark earth, where never Breath has
blown

Of heaven's sweet air, nor foot of man dares
tread

The long and perilous ways—the Cities of
the Dead:

And tombs of monarchs to the clouds up-
piled—

They perished—but the eternal tombs re-
main—

And the black precipice, abrupt and wild,
Pierced by long toil and hollowed to a fane ;—
Hugh piers and frowning forms of gods sus-
tain

The everlasting arches, dark and wide,
Like the night-heaven when clouds are black
with rain.

But idly skill was tasked, and strength was
plied,

All was the work of slaves to swell a despot's
pride.

And Virtue cannot dwell with slaves, nor
reign

O'er those who cower to take a tyrant's yoke ;
She left the down-trod nations in disdain,
And flew to Greece, when Liberty awoke,
New-born, amid those beautiful vales, and
broke

Scepter and chain with her fair youthful
hands :

As the rock shivers in the thunder-stroke.

And lo ! in full-grown strength, an empire
stands
Of leagued and rival states, the wonder of the
lands.

Oh, Greece, thy flourishing cities were a
spoil
Unto each other ; thy hard hand oppressed
And crushed the helpless ; thou didst make
thy soil
Drunk with the blood of those that loved
thee best ;
And thou didst drive, from thy unnatural
breast,
Thy just and brave to die in distant climes ;
Earth shuddered at thy deeds, and sighed
for rest
From thine abominations ; after times
That yet shall read thy tale, will tremble at
thy crimes.

Yet there was that within thee which has
saved
Thy glory, and redeemed thy blotted name ;
The story of thy better deeds, engraved
On fame's unmouldering pillar, puts to shame
Our chiller virtue ; the high art to tame

The whirlwind of the passions was thine
 own ;
And the pure ray, that from thy bosom came,
Far over many a land and age has shone,
And mingles with the light that beams from
 God's own throne.

And Rome—thy sterner, younger sister, she
Who awed the world with her imperial
 frown—
Rome drew the spirit of her race from thee,—
The rival of thy shame and thy renown.
Yet her degenerate children sold the crown
Of earth's wide kingdoms to a line of slaves ;
Guilt reigned, and woe with guilt, and
 plagues came down,
Till the north broke its floodgates, and the
 waves
Whelmed the degraded race, and weltered o'er
 their graves.

Vainly that ray of brightness from above,
That shone around the Galilean lake,
The light of hope, the leading star of love,
Struggled, the darkness of that day to break ;
Even its own faithless guardians strove to
 slake,

In fogs of earth, the pure immortal flame;
And priestly hands, for Jesus' blessed sake,
Were red with blood, and charity became,
In that stern war of forms, a mockery and a
name.

They triumphed, and less bloody rites were
kept

Within the quiet of the convent cell;
The well-fed inmates pattered prayer, and
slept,
And sinned, and liked their easy penance
well.

Where pleasant was the spot for men to
dwell,

Amid its fair broad lands the abbey lay,
Sheltering dark orgies that were shame to
tell,

And cowed and barefoot beggars swarmed
the way.

All in their convent weeds, of black, and
white, and gray.

Oh, sweetly the returning muses' strain
Swelled over that famed stream, whose gen-
tle tide

In their bright lap the Etrurian vales detain,

Sweet, as when winter storms have ceased to
chide,
And all the new-leaved woods, resounding
wide,
Send out wild hymns upon the scented air.
Lo ! to the smiling Arno's classic side
The emulous nations of the west repair,
And kindle their quenched urns, and drink
fresh spirit there.

Still, Heaven deferred the hour ordained to
rend
From saintly rottenness the sacred stole ;
And cowl and worshipped shrine could still
defend
The wretch with felon stains upon his soul ;
And crimes were set to sale, and hard his
dole
Who could not bribe a passage to the skies ;
And vice, beneath the mitre's kind control,
Sinned gayly on, and grew to giant size,
Shielded by priestly power, and watched by
priestly eyes.

At last the earthquake came—the shock,
that hurled
To dust, in many fragments dashed and
strown,

The throne, whose roots were in another
world,

And whose far-stretching shadow awed our
own.

From many a proud monastic pile, o'erthrown,
Fear-struck, the hooded inmates rushed and
fled ;

The web, that for a thousand years had
grown

O'er prostrate Europe, in that day of dread
Crumbled and fell, as fire dissolves the flaxen
thread.

The spirit of that day is still awake,
And spreads himself, and shall not sleep
again ;

But through the idle mesh of power shall
break,

Like billows o'er the Asian monarch's chain ;
Till men are filled with him, and feel how
vain,

Instead of the pure heart and innocent hands,
Are all the proud and pompous modes to
gain

The smile of heaven ;—till a new age expands
Its white and holy wings above the peaceful
lands.

For look again on the past years ;—behold,
Flown, like the nightmare's hideous shapes,
 away,
Full many a horrible worship, that, of old,
Held, o'er the shuddering realms, unquestioned sway :
See crimes that feared not once the eye of
 day,
Rooted from men, without a name or place :
See nations blotted out from earth, to pay
The forfeit of deep guilt ;—with glad embrace
The fair disburdened lands welcome a noble
 race.

Thus error's monstrous shapes from earth are
 driven,
They fade, they fly,—but truth survives their
 flight ;
Earth has no shades to quench that beam of
 heaven ;
Each ray, that shone, in early time, to light
The faltering footsteps in the path of right,
Each gleam of clearer brightness, shed to aid
In man's maturer day his bolder sight,
All blended, like the rainbow's radiant braid,
Pour yet, and still shall pour, the blaze that
 cannot fade.

Late, from this western shore, that morning
 chased
The deep and ancient night, that threw its
 shroud
O'er the green land of groves, the beautiful
 waste,
Nurse of full streams, and lifter up of proud
Sky-mingling mountains that o'erlook the
 cloud.
Erewhile, where yon gay spires their bright-
 ness rear,
Trees waved, and the brown hunter's shouts
 were loud
Amid the forest ; and the bounding deer
Fled at the glancing plume, and the gaunt wolf
 yelled near.

And where his willing waves yon bright blue
 bay

Sends up to kiss his decorated brim,
And cradles, in his soft embrace, the gay
Young group of grassy islands born of him,
And crowding nigh, or in the distance dim,
Lifts the white throng of sails, that bear or
 bring
The commerce of the world ;—with tawny
 limb,

And belt and beads in sunlight glistening,
The savage urged his skiff like wild bird on the
wing.

Then, all this youthful paradise around,
And all the broad and boundless mainland,
lay
Cooled by the interminable wood, that
frowned
O'er mount and vale, where never summer
ray
Glanced, till the strong tornado broke his
way
Through the gray giants of the sylvan wild ;
Yet many a sheltered glade, with blossoms
gay,
Beneath the showery sky and sunshine mild,
Within the shaggy arms of that dark forest
smiled.

There stood the Indian hamlet, there the lake
Spread its blue sheet that flashed with many
an oar,
Where the brown otter plunged him from the
brake,
And the deer drank : as the light gale flew
o'er,

The twinkling maize-field rustled on the
shore;
And while that spot, so wild, and lone, and
fair,
A look of glad and innocent beauty wore,
And peace was on the earth and in the air,
The warrior lit the pile, and bound his captive
there :

Not unavenged—the foeman, from the wood,
Beheld the deed, and when the midnight
shade
Was stillest, gorged his battle-axe with blood ;
All died—the wailing babe—the shrieking
maid—
And in the flood of fire that scathed the
glade,
The roofs went down ; but deep the silence
grew,
When on the dewy woods the day-beam
played ;
No more the cabin smokes rose wreathed
and blue,
And ever, by their lake, lay moored the light
canoe.

Look now abroad—another race has filled
These populous borders—wide the wood re-
cedes,
And towns shoot up, and fertile realms are
tilled ;
The land is full of harvests and green meads ;
Streams numberless, that many a fountain
feeds,
Shine, disembowered, and give to sun and
breeze
Their virgin waters; the full region leads
New colonies forth, that toward the western
seas
Spread, like a rapid flame among the autumnal
trees.

Here the free spirit of mankind, at length,
Throws its last fetters off; and who shall
place
A limit to the giant's unchained strength,
Or curb his swiftness in the forward race ?
Far, like the comet's way through infinite
space,
Stretches the long untravelled path of light
Into the depths of ages: we may trace,
Distant, the brightening glory of its light,
Till the receding rays are lost to human sight.

Europe is given a prey to sterner fates,
And writhes in shackles; strong the arms
that chain

To earth her struggling multitude of states
She too is strong, and might not chafe in
vain

Against them, but shake off the vampyre
train

That batten on her blood, and break their
net.

Yes, she shall look on brighter days, and gain
The meed of worthier deeds; the moment set
To rescue and raise up, draws near—but is not
yet.

But thou, my country, thou shalt never fall,
But with thy children—thy maternal care,
Thy lavish love, thy blessings showered on
all—

These are thy fetters—seas and stormy air
Are the wide barrier of thy borders, where,
Among thy gallant sons that guard thee well,
Thou laugh'st at enemies: who shall then
declare

The date of thy deep-founded strength, or
tell

How happy, in thy lap, the sons of men shall
dwell?

TO THE PAST.

THOU unrelenting Past!
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
And fetters, sure and fast,
Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
And glorious ages gone
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

Childhood, with all its mirth,
Youth, Manhood, Age, that draws us to the
ground,
And last, Man's Life on earth,
Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

Thou hast my better years,
Thou hast my earlier friends—the good—the
kind,
Yielded to thee with tears—
The venerable form—the exalted mind.

My spirit yearns to bring
The lost ones back—yearns with desire intense,
And struggles hard to wring
Thy bolts apart, and pluck thy captives thence.

In vain—thy gates deny
All passage save to those who hence depart ;
Nor to the streaming eye
Thou giv'st them back—nor to the broken heart.

In thy abysses hide
Beauty and excellence unknown—to thee
Earth's wonder and her pride
Are gathered, as the waters to the sea ;

Labors of good to man,
Unpublished charity, unbroken faith,—
Love, that midst grief began,
And grew with years, and faltered not in death.

Full many a mighty name
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered ;
With thee are silent fame,
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.

Thine for a space are they—
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last !
Thy gates shall yet give way,
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past !

All that of good and fair
Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,
Shall then come forth, to wear
The glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished—no !
Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat ;

All shall come back, each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again ;
Alone shall Evil die,
And Sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

And then shall I behold
Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
And her, who, still and cold,
Fills the next grave—the beautiful and young.

THANATOPSIS.

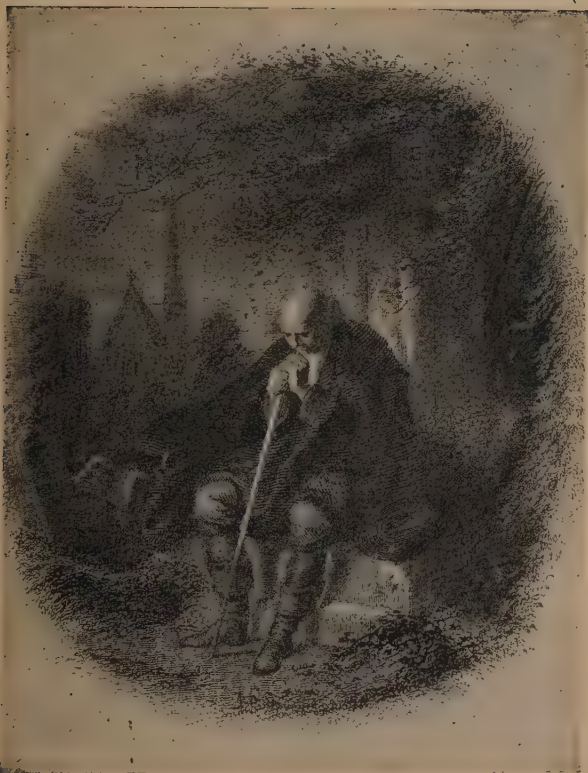
To him who in the love of nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language ; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When
thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight

Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart ;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course ; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall
claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The
oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy
mould.
Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone—nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down

With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre.—The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between ;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green ; and, poured
round all,

Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning—and the Barcan desert pierce,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are
there ;

And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest—and what if thou withdraw



Unheeded by the living—and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall
come,

And make their bed with thee. As the long
train

Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron, and maid,
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed
man,—

Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, that moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and
soothed

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

THE LAPSE OF TIME.

LAMENT who will, in fruitless tears,
The speed with which our moments fly;
I sigh not over vanished years,
But watch the years that hasten by.

Look, how they come,—a mingled crowd
Of bright and dark, but rapid days;
Beneath them, like a summer cloud,
The wide world changes as I gaze.

What! grieve that time has brought so soon
The sober age of manhood on?
As idly might I weep, at noon,
To see the blush of morning gone.

Could I give up the hopes that glow
In prospect, like Elysian isles;
And let the charming future go,
With all her promises and smiles?

The future!—cruel were the power
Whose doom would tear thee from my heart.
Thou sweetener of the present hour!
We cannot—no—we will not part.

Oh, leave me, still, the rapid flight
That makes the changing seasons gay,
The grateful speed that brings the night,
The swift and glad return of day ;

The months that touch, with added grace,
This little prattler at my knee,
In whose arch eye and speaking face
New meaning every hour I see ;

The years, that o'er each sister land
Shall lift the country of my birth
And nurse her strength, till she shall stand
The pride and pattern of the earth ;

Till younger commonwealths, for aid,
Shall cling about her ample robe,
And from her frown shall shrink afraid
The crowned oppressors of the globe.

True—time will seam and blanch my brow—
Well—I shall sit with aged men,
And my good glass will tell me how
A grizzly beard becomes me then.

And should no foul dishonor lie
Upon my head, when I am gray,
Love yet shall watch my fading eye,
And smooth the path of my decay.

Then, haste thee, Time—'tis kindness all
That speeds thy winged feet so fast;
Thy pleasures stay not till they pall,
And all thy pains are quickly past.

Thou fliest and bear'st away our woes,
And as thy shadowy train depart,
The memory of sorrow grows
A lighter burden on the heart.

TO THE EVENING WIND.

SPIRIT that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high
their spray,
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the
sea!

Nor I alone—a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight ;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night ;
And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade ; go forth,
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth !

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,
Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and
rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning from the innumerable boughs
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his
breast :
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly
bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And 'twixt the o'ershadowing branches and
the grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee ; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more
deep ;

And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go—but the circle of eternal change,
Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty
range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once
more ;
Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the home-sick mariner of the shore ;
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

FOREST HYMN.

THE groves were God's first temples. Ere
man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them,—ere he
framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems ; in the darkling wood,
Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down
And offered to the Mightiest, solemn thanks

And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences,
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in
 heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the
 sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at
 least,
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst
 look down
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,

Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy
breeze,
And shot toward heaven. The century-living
crow

Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and
died

Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
Fit shrine for humble worshipper to hold
Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults
These winding isles, of human pomp or pride
Report not. No fantastic carvings show,
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou
fill'st

The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summit of these trees
In music ;—thou art in the cooler breath,
That from the inmost darkness of the place,
Comes, scarcely felt ;—the barky trunks, the
ground,

The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with
thee.

Here is continual worship ;—nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird

Passes; and yon clear spring, that, 'midst its
herbs,

Wells softly forth and visits the strong roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength and
grace

Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated—not a prince,
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his
root

Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe.

My heart is awed within me, when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on.
In silence, round me—the perpetual work

Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.
Lo ! all grow old and die—but see, again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses—ever gay and beautiful youth
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Moulder beneath them. Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms : upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came
 forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid them-
 selves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they out-
 lived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks

Around them ;—and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence reassure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh, God ! when
thou

Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
With all the waters of the firmament,
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the
woods

And drowns the villages ; when, at thy call,
Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent, and overwhelms
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by ?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate
In these calm shades thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works,
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

THE OLD MAN'S FUNERAL.

I SAW an aged man upon his bier,

His hair was thin and white, and on his brow
A record of the cares of many a year;—

Cares that were ended and forgotten now.
And there was sadness round, and faces bowed,
And women's tears fell fast, and children
wailed aloud.

Then rose another hoary man and said,

In faltering accents, to that weeping train,
“Why mourn ye that our aged friend is dead?

Ye are not sad to see the gathered grain,
Nor when their mellow fruit the orchards cast,
Nor when the yellow woods shake down the
ripened mast.

“Ye sigh not when the sun, his course fulfilled,

His glorious course, rejoicing earth and sky,
In the soft evening, when the winds are stilled,
Sinks where his islands of refreshment lie,
And leaves the smile of his departure, spread
O'er the warm-colored heaven and ruddy
mountain head.

“Why weep ye then for him, who, having won
The bound of man's appointed years, at last,

Life's blessings all enjoyed, life's labors done,
Serenely to his final rest has passed ;
While the soft memory of his virtues, yet,
Lingers like twilight hues, when the bright sun
is set.

“ His youth was innocent ; his riper age,
Marked with some act of goodness, every
day ;
And watched by eyes that loved him, calm,
and sage,
Faded his late declining years away.
Cheerful he gave his being up, and went
To share the holy rest that waits a life well
spent.

“ That life was happy ; every day he gave
Thanks for the fair existence that was his ;
For a sick fancy made him not her slave,
To mock him with her phantom miseries.
No chronic tortures racked his aged limb,
For luxury and sloth had nourished none for
him.

“ And I am glad that he has lived thus long,
And glad, that he has gone to his reward ;

Nor deem, that kindly nature did him wrong,
Softly to disengage the vital cord.
When his weak hand grew palsied, and his eye
Dark with the mists of age, it was his time to
die."

THE PRAIRIES.

THESE are the Gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no
name—

The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they
stretch

In airy undulations, far away,
As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless forever.—Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,

Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have
played

Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no part in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown
their slopes

With herbage, planted them with island groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fitting
floor

For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above the eastern hills.

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his
sides,

The hollow beating of his footsteps seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here—

The dead of other days?—and did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty
mounds

That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race, that long has passed away,
Built them;— a disciplined and populous race
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the
Greek

Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
The glittering Parthenon. These ample fields
Nourished their harvests, here their herds were
fed,

When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his maned shoulder to the yoke.
All day this desert murmured with their toils,
Till twilight blushed and lovers walked, and
wooded

In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
Gave the soft winds a voice. The red man
came—

The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the
earth.



The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the
ground

Where stood their swarming cities. All is
gone—

All—save the piles of earth that hold their
bones—

The platforms where they worshipped unknown
gods—

The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
The wild beleaguers broke, and, one by one,
The strongholds of the plain were forced and
heaped

With corpses. The brown vultures of the wood
Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchres,
And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
Haply some solitary fugitive,
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
Of desolation and of fear became
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
Man's better nature triumphed. Kindly words
Welcomed and soothed him; the rude con-
querors

Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose

A bride among their maidens, and at length
Seemed to forget,—yet ne'er forgot,—the wife
Of his first love, and her sweet little ones
Butchered amid their shrieks, with all his race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise
Races of living things, glorious in strength,
And perish, as the quickening breath of God
Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red man
too—

Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,
And, near to the Rocky Mountains, sought
A wider hunting-ground. The beaver builds
No longer by these streams, but far away,
On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
The white man's face—among Missouri's
springs,

And pools whose issues swell the Oregon,
He rears his little Venice. In these plains
The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake
The earth with thundering steps—yet here I
meet

His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,

And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of
man,
Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee,
A more adventurous colonist than man,
With whom he came across the eastern deep,
Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
Within the hollow oak. I listen long
To his domestic hum, and think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the
ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark-brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my
dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone.

THE KNIGHT'S EPITAPH.

THIS is the church which Pisa, great and free,
Reared to St. Catharine. How the time-stained
walls,

That earthquakes shook not from their poise,
 appear
To shiver in the deep and voluble tones
Rolled from the organ! Underneath my feet
There lies the lid of a sepulchral vault.
The image of an armed knight is graven
Upon it, clad in perfect panoply—
Cuishes, and greaves, and cuirass, with barred
 helm,
Gauntleted hand, and sword, and blazoned
 shield.
Around, in Gothic characters, worn dim
By feet of worshippers, are traced his name,
And birth, and death, and words of eulogy.
Why should I pore upon them? This old tomb,
This effigy, the strange disused form
Of this inscription, eloquently show
His history. Let me clothe in fitting words
The thoughts they breathe, and frame his
 epitaph.

“ He whose forgotten dust for centuries
Has lain beneath this stone, was one in whom
Adventure, and endurance, and emprise
Exalted the mind's faculties and strung
The body's sinews. Brave he was in fight,
Courteous in banquet, scornful of repose,

And bountiful, and cruel, and devout,
And quick to draw the sword in private feud.
He pushed his quarrels to the death, yet prayed
The saints as fervently on bended knees
As ever shaven cenobite. He loved
As fiercely as he fought. He would have borne
The maid that pleased him from her bower by
night,

To his hill-castle, as the eagle bears
His victim from the fold, and rolled the rocks
On his pursuers. He aspired to see
His native Pisa queen and arbitress
Of cities ; earnestly for her he raised
His voice in council, and affronted death
In battle-field, and climbed the galley's deck,
And brought the captured flag of Genoa back,
Or piled upon the Arno's crowded quay
The glittering spoils of the tamed Saracen.
He was not born to brook the stranger's yoke,
But would have joined the exiles, that withdrew
For ever, when the Florentine broke in
The gates of Pisa, and bore off the bolts
For trophies—but he died before that day.

“ He lived, the impersonation of an age
That never shall return. His soul of fire
Was kindled by the breath of the rude time

He lived in. Now a gentler race succeeds,
Shuddering at blood ; the effeminate cavalier,
Turning from the reproaches of the past,
And from the hopeless future, gives to ease,
And love and music, his inglorious life."

SEVENTY-SIX.

WHAT heroes from the woodland sprung,
When, through the fresh awakened land,
The thrilling cry of freedom rung,
And to the work of warfare strung
The yoeman's iron hand !

Hills flung the cry to hills around,
And ocean-mart replied to mart,
And streams, whose springs were yet unfound,
Pealed far away the startling sound
Into the forest's heart.

Then marched the brave from rocky steep,
From mountain river swift and cold ;
The borders of the stormy deep,
The vales where gathered waters sleep,
Sent up the strong and bold,—

As if the very earth again

Grew quick with God's creating breath,
And, from the sods of grove and glen,
Rose ranks of lion-hearted men
To battle to the death.

The wife, whose babe first smiled that day,

The fair fond bride of yestereve,
And aged sire and matron gray,
Saw the loved warriors haste away,
And deemed it sin to grieve.

Already had the strife begun ;

Already blood on Concord's plain
Along the springing grass had run,
And blood had flowed at Lexington,
Like brooks of April rain.

That death-stain on the vernal sward

Hallowed to freedom all the shore ;
In fragments fell the yoke abhorred—
The footstep of a foreign lord
Profaned the soil no more.

THE HUNTER OF THE PRAIRIES.

Ay this is freedom!—these pure skies
Were never stained with village smoke :
The fragrant wind, that through them flies,
Is breathed from wastes by plough unbroke.
Here, with my rifle and my steed,
And her who left the world for me,
I plant me, where the red deer feed
In the green desert—and am free.

For here the fair savannas know
No barriers in the bloomy grass ;
Wherever breeze of heaven may blow,
Or beam of heaven may glance, I pass.
In pastures, measureless as air,
The bison is my noble game ;
The bounding elk, whose antlers tear
The branches, falls before my aim.

Mine are the river-fowl that scream
From the long stripe of waving sedge ;
The bear, that marks my weapon's gleam,
Hides vainly in the forest's edge ;
In vain the she-wolf stands at bay ;
The brindled catamount, that lies
High in the boughs to watch his prey,
Even in the act of springing, dies.

With what free growth the elm and plane
Fling their huge arms across my way,
Gray, old, and cumbered with a train
Of vines, as huge, and old, and gray !
Free stray the lucid streams, and find
No taint in these fresh lawns and shades ;
Free spring the flowers that scent the wind
Where never scythe has swept the glades.

Alone the Fire, when frostwinds sere
The heavy herbage of the ground,
Gathers his annual harvest here,
With roaring like the battle's sound,
And hurrying flames that sweep the plain,
And smoke-streams gushing up the sky :
I meet the flames with flames again,
And at my door they cower and die.

Here, from dim woods, the aged past
Speaks solemnly ; and I behold
The boundless future in the vast
And lonely river, seaward rolled.
Who feeds its founts with rain and dew ?
Who moves, I ask, its gliding mass,
And trains the bordering vines, whose blue
Bright clusters tempt me as I pass ?

Broad are these streams—my steed obeys,
Plunges, and bears me through the tide.
Wide are these woods—I thread the maze
Of giant stems, nor ask a guide.
I hunt, till day's last glimmer dies
O'er woody vale and grassy height ;
And kind the voice and glad the eyes,
That welcome my return at night.

A SONG OF PITCAIRN'S ISLAND.

COME, take our boy, and we will go
Before our cabin door ;
The winds shall bring us, as they blow,
The murmurs of the shore ;
And we will kiss his young blue eyes,
And I will sing him, as he lies,
Songs that were made of yore :
I'll sing, in his delighted ear,
The island lays thou lov'st to hear.

And thou, while stammering I repeat,
Thy country's tongue shalt teach ;
'Tis not so soft, but far more sweet,
Than my own native speech :
For thou no other tongue didst know,

A SONG OF PITCAIRN'S ISLAND. 63

When, scarcely twenty moons ago,
Upon Tahete's beach,
Thou cam'st to woo me to be thine,
With many a speaking look and sign.

I knew thy meaning—thou didst praise
My eyes, my locks of jet;
Ah! well for me they won thy gaze,—
But thine were fairer yet!
I'm glad to see my infant wear
Thy soft blue eyes and sunny hair,
And when my sight is met
By his white brow and blooming cheek,
I feel a joy I cannot speak.

Come talk of Europe's maids with me,
Whose necks and cheeks, they tell,
Outshine the beauty of the sea,
White foam and crimson shell.
I'll shape like theirs my simple dress,
And bind like them each jetty tress,
A sight to please thee well:
And for my dusky brow will braid
A bonnet like an English maid.

Come, for the soft low sunlight calls,
We lose the pleasant hours;

'Tis lovelier than these cottage walls,—
That seat among the flowers.
And I will learn of thee a prayer,
To Him, who gave a home so fair,
A lot so blessed as ours—
The God who made, for thee and me,
This sweet lone isle amid the sea.

RIZPAH.

And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord ; and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of the harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley-harvest.

And Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until the water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest upon them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.—2 SAM. xxi. 10.

HEAR what the desolate Rizpah said,
As on Gibeah's rocks she watched the dead.
The sons of Michal before her lay,
And her own fair children dearer than they :
By a death of shame they all had died,
And were stretched on the bare rock, side by side.
And Rizpah, once the loveliest of all

That bloomed and smiled in the court of Saul,
All wasted with watching and famine now,
And scorched by the sun her haggard brow,
Sat, mournfully guarding their corpses there,
And murmured a strange and solemn air ;
The low, heart-broken, and wailing strain
Of a mother that mourns her children slain.

“ I have made the crags my home, and spread
On their desert backs my sackcloth bed ;
I have eaten the bitter herb of the rocks,
And drunk the midnight dew in my locks ;
I have wept till I could not weep, and the pain
Of my burning eyeballs went to my brain.
Seven blackened corpses before me lie,
In the blaze of the sun and the winds of the
sky.

I have watched them through the burning day,
And driven the vulture and raven away ;
And the cormorant wheeled in circles round,
Yet feared to alight on the guarded ground.
And, when the shadows of twilight came,
I have seen the hyena's eyes of flame,
And heard at my side his stealthy tread,
But aye at my shout the savage fled :
And I threw the lighted brand, to fright
The jackal and wolf that yelled in the night.

“Ye were foully murdered, my hapless sons,
By the hands of wicked and cruel ones ;
Ye fell, in your fresh and blooming prime,
All innocent, for your father's crime.
He sinned—but he paid the price of his guilt
When his blood by a nameless hand was spilt ;
When he strove with the heathen host in vain,
And fell with the flower of his people slain,
And the sceptre his children's hands should
 sway
From his injured lineage passed away.

“But I hoped that the cottage roof would be
A safe retreat for my sons and me ;
And that while they ripened to manhood fast,
They should wean my thoughts from the woes
 of the past.
And my bosom swelled with a mother's pride,
As they stood in their beauty and strength by
 my side,
Tall like their sire, with the princely grace
Of his stately form, and the bloom of his face.

“Oh, what an hour for a mother's heart,
When the pitiless ruffians tore us apart !
When I clasped their knees and wept and
 prayed,

And struggled and shrieked to Heaven for aid,
And clung to my sons with desperate strength,
Till the murderers loosed my hold at length,
And bore me breathless and faint aside,
In their iron arms, while my children died.
They died—and the mother that gave them
 birth
Is forbid to cover their bones with earth.

“The barley-harvest was nodding white,
When my children died on the rocky height,
And the reapers were singing on hill and plain,
When I came to my task of sorrow and pain.
But now the season of rain is nigh,
The sun is dim in the thickening sky,
And the clouds in the sullen darkness rest
Where he hides his light at the doors of ~~the~~
 west.

I hear the howl of the wind that brings
The long drear storm on its heavy wings;
But the howling wind, and the driving rain
Will beat on my houseless head in vain:
I shall stay, from my murdered sons to scare
The beasts of the desert and fowls of air.”

THE ARCTIC LOVER.

GONE is the long, long winter night,
Look, my beloved one !
How glorious, through his depths of light,
Rolls the majestic sun.
The willows, waked from winter's death,
Give out a fragrance like thy breath—
The summer is begun !

Ay, 'tis the long bright summer day :
Hark, to that mighty crash !
The loosened ice-ridge breaks away—
The smitten waters flash.
Seaward the glittering mountain rides,
While, down its green translucent sides,
The foamy torrents dash.

See, love, my boat is moored for thee,
By ocean's weedy floor—
The petrel does not skim the sea
More swiftly than my oar.
We'll go where, on the rocky isles,
Her eggs the screaming sea-fowl piles
Beside the pebbly shore.

Or, bide thou where the poppy blows,
With wind-flowers frail and fair,

While I, upon his isle of snows,
Seek and defy the bear.
Fierce though he be, and huge of frame,
This arm his savage strength shall tame,
And drag him from his lair.

When crimson sky and flamy cloud
Bespeak the summer o'er,
And the dead valleys wear a shroud
Of snows that melt no more,
I'll build of ice thy winter home,
With glistening walls and glassy dome,
And spread with skins the floor.

The white fox by thy couch shall play;
And, from the frozen skies,
The meteors of a mimic day
Shall flash upon thine eyes.
And I—for such thy vow—meanwhile
Shall hear thy voice and see thy smile,
Till that long midnight flies.

ROMERO.

WHEN freedom, from the land of Spain,
By Spain's degenerate sons was driven,
Who gave their willing limbs again
To wear the chain so lately riven ;
Romero broke the sword he wore—
“Go, faithful brand,” the warrior said,
“Go, undishonored, never more
The blood of man shall make thee red ;
I grieve for that already shed ;
And I am sick at heart to know,
That faithful friend and noble foe
Have only bled to make more strong
The yoke that Spain has worn so long.
Wear it who will, in abject fear—
I wear it not who have been free ;
The perjured Ferdinand shall hear
No oath of loyalty from me.”
Then, hunted by the hounds of power,
Romero chose a safe retreat,
Where bleak Nevada's summits tower
Above the beauty at their feet.
There once, when on his cabin lay
The crimson light of setting day,
When even on the mountain's breast
The chainless winds were all at rest,
And he could hear the river's flow

From the calm paradise below ;
Warmed with his former fires again,
He framed this rude but solemn strain.

“ Here will I make my home—for here at
least I see,
Upon this wild Sierra's side, the steps of Lib-
erty ;
Where the locust chirps unscared beneath the
unpruned lime,
And the merry bee doth hide from man the
spoil of the mountain thyme ;
Where the pure winds come and go, and the
wild vine strays at will,
An outcast from the haunts of men, she dwells
with Nature still.

“ I see the valleys, Spain ! where thy mighty
rivers run,
And the hills that lift thy harvests and vine-
yards to the sun,
And the flocks that drink thy brooks and
sprinkle all the green,
Where lie thy plains, with sheep-walks seamed,
and olive shades between :
I see thy fig-trees bask, with the fair pome-
granate near,

And the fragrance of thy lemon-groves can
almost reach me here.

“Fair—fair—but fallen Spain! ’tis with a
swelling heart,
That I think on all thou might'st have been,
and look at what thou art;
But the strife is over now—and all the good
and brave,
That would have raised thee up, are gone, to
exile or the grave.
Thy fleeces are for monks, thy grapes for the
convent feast,
And the wealth of all thy harvest-fields for the
pampered lord and priest.

“But I shall see the day—it will come before
I die—
I shall see it in my silver hairs, and with an
age-dimmed eye;—
When the spirit of the land to liberty shall
bound,
As yonder fountain leaps away from the dark-
ness of the ground;
And, to my mountain cell, the voices of the
free
Shall rise, as from the beaten shore the thun-
ders of the sea.”

MONUMENT MOUNTAIN.

THOU who wouldst see the lovely and the wild
Mingled in harmony on Nature's face,
Ascend our rocky mountains. Let thy foot
Fail not with weariness, for on their tops
The beauty and the majesty of earth,
Spread wide beneath, shall make thee to forget
The steep and toilsome way. There, as thou
stand'st,

The haunts of men below thee, and around
The mountain summits, thy expanding heart
Shall feel a kindred with that loftier world
To which thou art translated, and partake
The enlargement of thy vision. Thou shalt
look

Upon the green and rolling forest tops,
And down into the secrets of the glens,
And streams, that with their bordering thickets
strive

To hide their windings. Thou shalt gaze, at
once,

Here on white villages, and tilth, and herds,
And swarming roads, and there on solitudes.
That only hear the torrent, and the wind,
And eagle's shriek. There is a precipice
That seems a fragment of some mighty wall,
Built by the hand that fashioned the old world,

To separate its nations, and thrown down
When the flood drowned them. To the north
a path

Conducts you up the narrow battlement.
Steep is the western side, shaggy and wild
With mossy trees, and pinnacles of flint,
And many a hanging crag. But, to the east,
Sheer to the vale go down the bare old cliffs,
Huge pillars, that in middle heaven upbear
Their weather-beaten capitals, here dark
With the thick moss of centuries, and there
Of chalky whiteness where the thunderbolt
Has splintered them. It is a fearful thing
To stand upon the beetling verge, and see
Where storm and lightning, from that huge
wall,

Have tumbled down vast blocks, and at the
base

Dashed them in fragments, and to lay thine ear
Over the dizzy depth, and hear the sound
Of winds, that struggle with the woods below,
Come up like ocean murmurs. But the scene
Is lovely round ; a beautiful river there
Wanders amid the fresh and fertile meads,
The paradise he made unto himself,
Mining the soil for ages. On each side
The fields swell upward to the hills ; beyond,

Above the hills, in the blue distance, rise
The mighty columns with which earth props
heaven.

There is a tale about these gray old rocks,
A sad tradition of unhappy love
And sorrows borne and ended, long ago,
When over these fair vales the savage sought
His game in the thick woods. There was a
maid,
The fairest of the Indian maids, bright-eyed,
With wealth of raven tresses, a light form,
And a gay heart. About her cabin door
The wide old woods resounded with her song
And fairy laughter all the summer day.
She loved her cousin ; such a love was deemed,
By the morality of those stern tribes,
Incestuous, and she struggled hard and long
Against her love, and reasoned with her heart,
As simple Indian maiden might. In vain.
Then her eye lost its lustre, and her step
Its lightness, and the gray old men that passed
Her dwelling, wondered that they heard no more
The accustomed song and laugh of her, whose
looks
Were like the cheerful smile of Spring, they
said,

Upon the Winter of their age. She went
To weep where no eye saw, and was not found
When all the merry girls were met to dance,
And all the hunters of the tribe were out ;
Nor when they gathered from the rustling husk
The shining ear ; nor when, by the river's side,
They pulled the grape and startled the wild
shades

With sounds of mirth. The keen-eyed Indian
dames

Would whisper to each other, as they saw
Her wasting form, and say, *the girl will die.*

One day into the bosom of a friend,
A playmate of her young and innocent years,
She poured her griefs. "Thou know'st, and
thou alone,"

She said, "for I have told thee, all my love,
And guilt, and sorrow. I am sick of life.
All night I weep in darkness, and the morn
Glares on me, as upon a thing accursed,
That has no business on the earth. I hate
The pastimes and the pleasant toils that once
I loved ; the cheerful voices of my friends
Have an unnatural horror in mine ear.
In dreams my mother, from the land of souls,
Calls me and chides me. All that look on me
Do seem to know my shame ; I cannot bear

Their eyes; I cannot from my heart root out
The love that wrings it so, and I must die."

It was a summer morning, and they went
To this old precipice. About the cliffs
Lay garlands, ears of maize, and shaggy skins
Of wolf and bear, the offerings of the tribe
Here made to the Great Spirit, for they deemed,
Like worshippers of the elder time, that God
Doth walk on the high places and affect
The earth-o'erlooking mountains. She had on
The ornaments with which her father loved
To deck the beauty of his bright-eyed girl,
And bade her wear when stranger warriors
came
To be his guests. Here the friends sat them
down,
And sang, all day, old songs of love and death,
And decked the poor wan victim's hair with
flowers,
And prayed that safe and swift might be her
way
To the calm world of sunshine, where no grief
Makes the heart heavy and the eyelids red.
Beautiful lay the region of her tribe
Below her—waters resting in the embrace
Of the wide forest, and maize-planted glades

Opening amid the leafy wilderness.
She gazed upon it long, and at the sight
Of her own village peeping through the trees,
And her own dwelling, and the cabin roof
Of him she loved with an unlawful love,
And came to die for, a warm gush of tears
Ran from her eyes. But when the sun grew
 low
And the hill shadows long, she threw herself
From the steep rock and perished. There was
 scooped,
Upon the mountain's southern slope, a grave;
And there they laid her, in the very garb
With which the maiden decked herself for
 death
With the same withering wild flowers in her
 hair.
And o'er the mould that covered her, the tribe
Built up a simple monument, a cone
Of small loose stones. Thenceforward, all
 who passed,
Hunter, and dame, and virgin, laid a stone
In silence on the pile. It stands there yet.
And Indians from the distant West, who come
To visit where their fathers' bones are laid,
Yet tell the sorrowful tale, and to this day
The mountain where the hapless maiden died
Is called the Mountain of the Monument.

SONG OF MARION'S MEN.

OUR band is few, but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold ;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree ;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea.
We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near !
On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear :
When waking to their tents on fire
They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again ;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil :
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil.
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly,
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads—
The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life our fiery barbs to guide
Across the moonlight plains ;
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
That lifts their tossing manes.
A moment in the British camp—
A moment—and away
Back to the pathless forest,
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs,

Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band,
With kindest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more
Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever from our shore.

THE DISINTERRED WARRIOR.

GATHER him to his grave again
And solemnly and softly lay,
Beneath the verdure of the plain,
The warrior's scattered bones away.
Pay the deep reverence, taught of old,
The homage of man's heart to death;
Nor dare to trifle with the mould
Once hallowed by the Almighty's breath.

The soul hath quickened every part—
That remnant of a martial brow,
Those ribs that held the mighty heart,
That strong arm—strong no longer now.

Spare them, each mouldering relic spare,
Of God's own image ; let them rest,
Till not a trace shall speak of where
The awful likeness was impressed.

For he was fresher from the hand
That formed of earth the human face,
And to the elements did stand
In nearer kindred than our race.
In many a flood to madness tossed,
In many a storm has been his path ;
He hid him not from heat or frost,
But met them, and defied their wrath.

Then they were kind—the forests here,
Rivers, and stiller waters paid
A tribute to the net and spear
Of the red ruler of the shade.
Fruits on the woodland branches lay,
Roots in the shaded soil below,
The stars looked forth to teach his way,
The still earth warned him of the foe.

A noble race ! but they are gone,
With their old forests wide and deep,
And we have built our homes upon
Fields where their generations sleep.

Their fountains slake our thirst at noon,
Upon their fields our harvest waves,
Our lovers woo beneath their moon—
Ah, let us spare, at least, their graves !

THE HURRICANE.

LORD of the winds ! I feel thee nigh,
I know thy breath in the burning sky !
And I wait, with a thrill in every vein,
For the coming of the hurricane !

And lo ! on the wing of the heavy gales,
Through the boundless arch of heaven he
sails ;

Silent, and slow, and terribly strong,
The mighty shadow is borne along,
Like the dark eternity to come ;
While the world below, dismayed and dumb,
Through the calm of the thick hot atmosphere
Looks up at its gloomy folds with fear.

They darken fast—and the golden blaze
Of the sun is quenched in the lurid haze,
And he sends through the shade a funeral
ray—

A glare that is neither night nor day,
A beam that touches, with hues of death,

The clouds above and the earth beneath.
To its covert glides the silent bird,
While the hurricane's distant voice is heard,
Uplifted among the mountains round,
And the forests hear and answer the sound.

He is come! he is come! do ye not behold
His ample robes on the wind unrolled?
Giant of air! we bid thee hail!—
How his gray skirts toss in the whirling gale;
How his huge and writhing arms are bent,
To clasp the zone of the firmament,
And fold, at length, in their dark embrace,
From mountain to mountain the visible space.

Darker—still darker! the whirlwinds bear
The dust of the plains to the middle air:
And hark to the crashing, long and loud,
Of the chariot of God in the thunder-cloud!
You may trace its path by the flashes that start
From the rapid wheels where'er they dart,
As the fire-bolts leap to the world below,
And flood the skies with a lurid glow.

What roar is that?—'tis the rain that breaks
In torrents away from the airy lakes,
Heavily poured on the shuddering ground,
And shedding a nameless horror round.
Ah! well-known woods, and mountains, and
skies,



With the very clouds !—ye are lost to my eyes.
I seek ye vainly, and see in your place
The shadowy tempest that sweeps through
 space,
A whirling ocean that fills the wall
Of the crystal heaven and buries all.
And I, cut off from the world, remain
Alone with the terrible hurricane.

“OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL
MAIDS.”

OH fairest of the rural maids !
Thy birth was in the forest shades ;
Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
Were all that met thy infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild ;
And all the beauty of the place,
Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks ;
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.

Thy eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters heaven is seen ;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
Are not more sinless than thy breast ;
The holy peace that fills the air
Of those calm solitudes is there.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE ENTRANCE
TO A WOOD.

STRANGER, if thou hast learned a truth
which needs
No school of long experience, that the world
Is full of guilt and misery, and has seen
Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares,
To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
And view the haunts of Nature. The calm
shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet
breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft
a balm
To thy sick heart. Thou wilt find nothing here
Of all that pained thee in the haunts of men

And made thee loathe thy life. The primal
curse

Fell, it is true, upon the unsinuing earth,
But not in vengeance. God hath yoked to
Guilt

Her pale tormentor, Misery. Hence these
shades

Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive

And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit; while below

The squirrel, with raised paws and form erect,
Chirps merrily. Throngs of insects in the
shade

Try their thin wings and dance in the warm
beam

That waked them into life. Even the green
trees

Partake the deep contentment; as they bend

To the soft winds, the sun from the blue sky

Looks in and sheds a blessing on the scene.

Scarce less the cleft-born wild-flower seems to
enjoy

Existence, than the winged plunderer

That sucks its sweets. The massy rocks them-
selves,

And the old and ponderous trunks of prostrate
trees

That lead from knoll to knoll a causey rude
Or bridge the sunken brook, and their dark
roots,

With all their earth upon them, twisting high,
Breathed fixed tranquillity. The rivulet
Sends forth glad sounds, and tripping o'er its
bed

Of pebbly sands, or leaping down the rocks,
Seems, with continuous laughter, to rejoice
In its own being. Softly tread the marge,
Lest from her midway perch thou scare the
wren

That dips her bill in water. The cool wind,
That stirs the stream in play, shall come to
thee,

Like one that loves thee nor will let thee pass
Ungreeted, and shall give its light embrace.

TO A MOSQUITO.

FAIR insect! that, with threadlike legs spread
out,

And blood-extracting bill and filmy wing,
Dost murmur, as thou slowly sail'st about,

In pitiless ears full many a plaintive thing,
And tell how little our large veins should bleed,
Would we but yield them to thy bitter need.

Unwillingly, I own, and, what is worse,
Full angrily, men hearken to thy plaint,
Thou gettest many a brush, and many a curse,
For saying thou art gaunt, and starved, and
faint;
Even the old beggar, while he asks for food,
Would kill thee, hapless stranger, if he could.

I call thee stranger, for the town, I ween,
Has not the honor of so proud a birth,
Thou com'st from Jersey meadows, fresh and
green,
The offspring of the gods, though born on
earth;
For Titan was thy sire, and fair was she,
The ocean nymph, that nursed thy infancy.

Beneath the rushes was thy cradle swung,
And when, at length, thy gauzy wings grew
strong,
Abroad to gentle airs their folds were flung,
Rose in the sky and bore thee soft along:
The south wind breathed to waft thee on thy
way,

And danced and shone beneath the billowy
bay.

And calm, afar, the city spires arose,—
Thence didst thou hear the distant hum of
men,
And as its grateful odors met thy nose,
Didst seem to smell thy native marsh again ;
Fair lay its crowded streets, and at the sight
Thy tiny songs grew shriller with delight.

At length thy pinions fluttered in Broadway—
Ah, there were fairy steps, and white necks
kissed
By wanton airs, and eyes whose killing ray
Shone through the snowy veils like stars
through mist ;
And fresh as morn, on many a cheek and chin,
Bloomed the bright blood through the trans-
parent skin.

Oh, these were sights to touch an anchorite !
What ! do I hear thy slender voice complain ?
Thou wailest, when I talk of beauty's light,
As if it brought the memory of pain :
Thou art a wayward being—well—come near,
And pour thy tale of sorrow in my ear.

What say'st thou—slanderer!—rouge makes thee sick?

And China bloom at best is sorry food?
And Rowland's Kalydor, if laid on thick,
Poisons the thirsty wretch that bores for blood?

Go! 'twas a just reward that met thy crime—
But shun the sacrilege another time.

That bloom was made to look at, not to touch,
To worship, not approach, that radiant white;
And well might sudden vengeance light on such
As dared, like thee, most impiously to bite.
Thou shouldst have gazed at distance and admired,
Murmured thy adoration and retired.

Thou'rt welcome to the town—but why come here

To bleed a brother poet, gaunt like thee?
Alas! the little blood I have is dear,
And thin will be the banquet drawn from me.
Look round—the pale-eyed sisters in my cell,
Thy old acquaintance, Song and Famine, dwell.

Try some plump alderman, and suck the blood
Enriched by generous wine and costly meat;

On well-filled skins, sleek as thy native mud,
Fix thy light pump and press thy freckled
feet :

Go to the men for whom, in ocean's halls,
The oyster breeds, and the green turtle sprawls.

There corks are drawn, and the red vintage
flows

To fill the swelling veins for thee, and now
The ruddy cheek and now the ruddier nose
Shall tempt thee, as thou flittest round the
brow ;

And, when the hour of sleep its quiet brings,
No angry hand shall rise to brush thy wings.

"I BROKE THE SPELL THAT HELD
ME LONG."

I BROKE the spell that held me long,
The dear, dear witchery of song.
I said, the poet's idle lore
Shall waste my prime of years no more,
For Poetry, though heavenly born,
Consorts with poverty and scorn.

I broke the spell—nor deemed its power
Could fetter me another hour.

Ah, thoughtless ! how could I forget
Its causes were around me yet ?
For whereso'er I looked, the while,
Was Nature's everlasting smile.

Still came and lingered on my sight
Of flowers and streams the bloom and light,
And glory of the stars and sun ;—
And these and poetry are one.
They, ere the world had held me long,
Recalled me to the love of song.

THE CONJUNCTION OF JUPITER AND VENUS.

I WOULD not always reason. The straight
path
Wearies us with its never-varying lines,
And we grow melancholy. I would make
Reason my guide, but she should sometimes sit
Patiently by the way-side, while I traced
The mazes of the pleasant wilderness
Around me. She should be my counsellor,
But not my tyrant. For the spirit needs
Impulses from a deeper source than hers,
And there are motions, in the mind of man,
That she must look upon with awe. I bow

Reverently to her dictates, but not less
Hold to the fair illusions of old time—
Illusions that shed brightness over life,
And glory over nature. Look, even now,
Where two bright planets in the twilight meet,
Upon the saffron heaven,—the imperial star
Of Jove, and she that from her radiant urn
Pours forth the light of love. Let me believe,
Awhile, that they are met for ends of good,
Amid the evening glory, to confer
Of men and their affairs, and to shed down
Kind influence. Lo! their orbs burn more
 bright,
And shake out softer fires! The great earth
 feels
The gladness and the quiet of the time.
Meekly the mighty river, that infolds
This mighty city, smooths his front, and far
Glitters and burns even to the rocky base
Of the dark heights that bound him to the
 West;
And a deep murmur, from the many streets,
Rises like a thanksgiving. Put we hence
Dark and sad thoughts awhile—there's time
 for them
Hereafter—on the morrow we will meet,
With melancholy looks, to tell our griefs,

And make each other wretched; this calm
hour,

This balmy, blessed evening, we will give
To cheerful hopes and dreams of happy days,
Born of the meeting of those glorious stars.

Enough of drought has parched the year,
and scared

The land with dread of famine. Autumn, yet,
Shall make men glad with unexpected fruits.
The dog-star shall shine harmless; genial days
Shall softly glide away into the keen
And wholesome cold of winter; he that fears
The pestilence, shall gaze on those pure beams,
And breathe, with confidence, the quiet air.

Emblems of power and beauty! well may
they

Shine brightest on our borders, and withdraw
Toward the great Pacific, marking out
The path of empire. Thus, in our own land,
Erelong, the better Genius of our race,
Having encompassed earth, and tamed its
tribes,

Shall sit him down beneath the farthest West,
By the shore of that calm ocean, and look back
On realms made happy.

Light the nuptial torch,
And say the glad, yet solemn rite, that knits
The youth and maiden. Happy days to them
That wed this evening!—a long life of love,
And blooming sons and daughters! Happy
they
Born at this hour,—for they shall see an age
Whiter and holier than the past, and go
Late to their graves. Men shall wear softer
hearts,
And shudder at the butcheries of war,
As now at other murders.

Hapless Greece!
Enough of blood has wet thy rocks, and
stained
Thy rivers; deep enough thy chains have worn
Their links into thy flesh; the sacrifice
Of thy pure maidens, and thy innocent babes,
And reverend priests, has expiated all
Thy crimes of old. In yonder mingling lights
There is an omen of good days for thee.
Thou shalt arise from 'midst the dust and sit
Again among the nations. Thine own arm
Shall yet redeem thee. Not in wars like thine
The world takes part. Be it a strife of kings,—
Despot with despot battling for a throne,—

And Europe shall be stirred throughout her
realms,
Nations shall put on harness, and shall fall
Upon each other, and in all their bounds
The wailing of the childless shall not cease.
Thine is a war for liberty, and thou
Must fight it single-handed. The old world
Looks coldly on the murderers of thy race,
And leaves thee to the struggle ; and the new,—
I fear me thou couldst tell a shameful tale
Of fraud and lust of gain ;—thy treasury
drained,
And Missolonghi fallen. Yet thy wrongs
Shall put new strength into thy heart and hand,
And God and thy good sword shall yet work
out,
Wor thee, a terrible deliverance.

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

THOU blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest, when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,

Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late, and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

“INNOCENT CHILD AND SNOW-
WHITE FLOWER.”

INNOCENT child and snow-white flower !
Well are ye paired in your opening hour.
Thus should the pure and the lovely meet,
Stainless with stainless, and sweet with sweet.

White as those leaves, just blown apart,
Are the folds of thy own young heart ;
Guilty passion and cankering care
Never have left their traces there.

Artless one ! though thou gazest now
O'er the white blossom with earnest brow,
Soon will it tire thy childish eye,
Fair as it is, thou wilt throw it by.

Throw it aside in thy weary hour,
Throw to the ground the fair white flower,
Yet, as thy tender years depart,
Keep that white and innocent heart.

AN INDIAN AT THE BURIAL-PLACE
OF HIS FATHERS.

It is the spot I came to seek,—
My fathers' ancient burial-place,
Ere from these vales, ashamed and weak,
Withdrew our wasted race.
It is the spot,—I know it well—
Of which our old traditions tell.

For here the upland bank sends out
A ridge toward the river-side ;
I know the shaggy hills about,
The meadows smooth and wide,
The plains, that, toward the southern sky,
Fenced east and west by mountains lie.

A white man, gazing on the scene,
Would say a lovely spot was here,
And praise the lawns, so fresh and green,
Between the hills so sheer.
I like it not—I would the plain
Lay in its tall old groves again.

The sheep are on the slopes around,
The cattle in the meadows feed,
And laborers turn the crumbling ground,
Or drop the yellow seed,
And prancing steeds, in trappings gay,
Whirl the bright chariot o'er the way.

Methinks it were a nobler sight
To see these vales in woods arrayed,
Their summits in the golden light,
Their trunks in grateful shade,
And herds of deer, that bounding go
O'er rills and prostrate trees below.



And then to mark the lord of all,
The forest hero, trained to wars,
Quivered and plumed, and lithe and tall,
And seamed with glorious scars,
Walk forth, amid his reign, to dare
The wolf, and grapple with the bear.

This bank, in which the dead were laid,
Was sacred when its soil was ours ;
Hither the artless Indian maid
Brought wreaths of beads and flowers,
And the gray chief and gifted seer
Worshipped the god of thunders here.

But now the wheat is green and high
On clods that hid the warrior's breast,
And scattered in the furrows lie
The weapons of his rest,
And there, in the loose sand, is thrown
Of his large arm the mouldering bone.

Ah, little thought the strong and brave,
Who bore the lifeless chieftain forth ;
Or the young wife, that weeping gave
Her first-born to the earth,
That the pale race, who waste us now,
Among their bones should guide the plough.

They waste us—ay—like April snow
In the warm noon, we shrink away ;
And fast they follow, as we go
Towards the setting day,—
Till they shall fill the land, and we
Are driven into the western sea.

But I behold a fearful sign,
To which the white men's eyes are blind ;
Their race may vanish hence, like mine,
And leave no trace behind,
Save ruins o'er the region spread,
And the white stones above the dead.

Before these fields were shorn and tilled,
Full to the brim our rivers flowed ;
The melody of waters filled
The fresh and boundless wood ;
And torrents dashed and rivulets played,
And fountains spouted in the shade.

Those grateful sounds are heard no more,
The springs are silent in the sun,
The rivers, by the blackened shore,
With lessening current run ;
The realm our tribes are crushed to get
May be a barren desert yet.

TO A CLOUD.

BEAUTIFUL cloud ! with folds so soft and fair,
Swimming in the pure quiet air !
Thy fleeces bathed in sunlight, while below
Thy shadow o'er the vale moves slow ;
Where, midst their labor, pause the reaper
train

As cool it comes along the grain.
Beautiful cloud ! I would I were with thee
In thy calm way o'er land and sea :
To rest on thy unrolling skirts, and look
On Earth as on an open book ;
On streams that tie her realms with silver bands,
And the long ways that seam her lands ;
And hear her humming cities, and the sound
Of the great ocean breaking round.
Ay—I would sail upon thy air-borne car
To blooming regions distant far,
To where the sun of Andalusia shines
On his own olive-groves and vines,
Or the soft lights of Italy's bright sky
In smiles upon her ruins lie.
But I would woo the winds to let us rest
O'er Greece long fettered and oppressed,
Whose sons at length have heard the call **that**
comes
From the old battle-fields and tombs,

And risen, and drawn the sword, and on the foe
Have dealt the swift and desperate blow,
And the Othman power is cloven, and the
stroke

Has touched its chains, and they are broke.
Ay, we would linger till the sunset there
Should come, to purple all the air,
And thou reflect upon the sacred ground
The ruddy radiance streaming round.

Bright meteor ! for the summer noontide made !
Thy peerless beauty yet shall fade.
The sun, that fills with light each glistening
fold,
Shall set, and leave thee dark and cold :
The blast shall rend thy skirts, or thou may'st
frown
In the dark heaven when storms come down,
And weep in rain, till man's inquiring eye
Miss thee, forever, from the sky.

THE YELLOW VIOLET.

WHEN beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the blue-bird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love, in forest bare,
To meet thee, when thy faint perfume
Alone is in the virgin air.

Of all her train, the hands of Spring
First plant thee in the watery mould,
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beside the snow-bank's edges cold.

Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

Yet slight thy form, and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh.

Oft, in the sunless April day,
Thy early smile has stayed my walk,
But 'midst the gorgeous blooms of May,
I passed thee on thy humble stalk.

So they, who climb to wealth, forget
The friends in darker fortunes tried
I copied them—but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light,
I'll not o'erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright.

"I CANNOT FORGET WITH WHAT
FERVID DEVOTION."

I CANNOT forget with what fervid devotion
I worshipped the visions of verse and of
fame;
Each gaze at the glories of earth, sky, and
ocean,
To my kindled emotions, was wind over
flame.

And deep were my musings in life's early
blossom,
'Mid the twilight of mountain groves wan-
dering long;
How thrilled my young veins, and how throbbed
my full bosom,
When o'er me descended the spirit of song.

'Mong the deep-cloven fells that for ages had
listened

To the rush of the pebble-paved river be-
tween,

Where the kingfisher screamed and gray pre-
cipice glistened,

All breathless with awe have I gazed on the
scene ;

Till I felt the dark power o'er my reveries
stealing,

From his throne in the depth of that stern
solitude,

And he breathed through my lips, in that
tempest of feeling,

Strains warm with his spirit, though artless
and rude.

Bright visions ! I mixed with the world and ye
faded ;

No longer your pure rural worshipper now ;

In the haunts your continual presence pervaded,

Ye shrink from the signet of care on my brow.

In the old mossy groves on the breast of the
mountain,

In deep lonely glens where the waters com-
plain,

By the shade of the rock, by the gush of the
fountain,
I seek your loved footsteps, but seek them in
vain.

Oh, leave not, forlorn and forever forsaken,
Your pupil and victim, to life and its tears !
But sometimes return, and in mercy awaken
The glories ye showed to his earlier years.

MUTATION.

(A SONNET.)

THEY talk of short-lived pleasure—be it so—
Pain dies as quickly: stern, hard-featured
pain
Expires, and lets her weary prisoner go.
The fiercest agonies have shortest reign ;
And after dreams of horror, comes again
The welcome morning with its rays of peace.
Oblivion, softly wiping out the stain,
Makes the strong secret pangs of shame to
cease :
Remorse is virtue's root ; its fair increase
Are fruits of innocence and blessedness :

HYMN TO THE NORTH STAR. 109

Thus joy, o'erborne and bound, doth still release

His young limbs from the chains that round him press.

Weep not that the world changes—did it keep
A stable changeless state, 'twere cause indeed
to weep.

HYMN TO THE NORTH STAR.

THE sad and solemn night
Has yet her multitude of cheerful fires ;
The glorious host of light
Walk the dark hemisphere till she retires ;
All through her silent watches, gliding slow,
Her constellations come, and climb the heavens,
and go.

Day, too, hath many a star
To grace his gorgeous reign, as bright as they :
Through the blue fields afar,
Unseen, they follow in his flaming way :
Many a bright lingerer, as the eve grows dim,
Tells what a radiant troop arose and set with
him.

And thou dost see them rise,
Star of the Pole ! and thou dost see them set.
Alone, in thy cold skies,
Thou keep'st thy old unmoving station yet,
Nor join'st the dances of that glittering train,
Nor dipp'st thy virgin orb in the blue western
main.

There, at morn's rosy birth,
Thou lookest meekly through the kindling air,
And eve, that round the earth
Chases the day, beholds thee watching there ;
There noontide finds thee, and the hour that
calls
The shapes of polar flame to scale heaven's
azure walls.

Alike, beneath thine eye,
The deeds of darkness and of light are done ;
High toward the star-lit sky
Towns blaze—the smoke of battle blots the
sun—
The night-storm on a thousand hills is loud—
And the strong wind of day doth mingle sea
and cloud.

TWENTY-SECOND DECEMBER. III

On thy unaltering blaze
The half-wrecked mariner, his compass lost,
Fixes his steady gaze,
And steers, undoubting, to the friendly coast ;
And they who stray in perilous wastes, by
night,
Are glad when thou dost shine to guide their
footsteps right.

And, therefore, bards of old,
Sages, and hermits of the solemn wood,
Did in thy beams behold
A beauteous type of that unchanging good,
That bright eternal beacon, by whose ray
The voyager of time should shape his heedful
way.

THE TWENTY-SECOND OF DECEMBER.

WILD was the day ; the wintry sea
Moaned sadly on New England's strand,
When first, the thoughtful and the free,
Our fathers trod the desert land.

They little thought how pure a light,
With years, should gather round that day ;

How love should keep their memories bright,
How wide a realm their sons should sway.

Green are their bays ; but greener still
Shall round their spreading fame be wreathed,
And regions, now untrod, shall thrill
With reverence, when their names are
breathed.

Till where the sun, with softer fires,
Looks on the vast Pacific's sleep,
The children of the pilgrim sires
This hallowed day like us shall keep.

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES.

HEAR, Father, hear thy faint afflicted flock
Cry to thee, from the desert and the rock ;
While those, who seek to slay thy children,
hold
Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold ;
And the broad goodly lands, with pleasant airs
That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are
theirs.

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES. 113

Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
And this wild life of danger and distress—
Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray,
Better, far better, than to kneel with them,
And pay the impious rite thy laws condemn.

Thou, Lord, dost hold the thunder; the firm
land
Tosses in billows when it feels thy hand;
Thou dashest nation against nation, then
Stillest the angry world to peace again.
Oh, touch their stony hearts who hunt thy sons—
The murderers of our wives and little ones.

Yet, mighty God, yet shall thy frown look forth
Unveiled, and terribly shall shake the earth.
Then the foul power of priestly sin and all
Its long-upheld idolatries shall fall.
Thou shalt raise up the trampled and oppressed,
And thy delivered saints shall dwell in rest.

SONG OF THE STARS.

WHEN the radiant morn of creation broke,
And the world in the smile of God awoke,
And the empty realms of darkness and death
Were moved through their depths by his mighty
 breath,
And orbs of beauty and spheres of flame
From the void abyss by myriads came, —
In the joy of youth as they darted away,
Through the widening wastes of space to play,
Their silver voices in chorus rung,
And this was the song the bright ones sung.

“ Away, away, through the wide, wide sky, —
The fair blue fields that before us lie, —
Each sun, with the worlds that round him roll,
Each planet, poised on her turning pole ;
With her isles of green and her clouds of
 white,
And her waters that lie like fluid light.

“ For the source of glory uncovers his face,
And the brightness o'erflows unbounded space ;
And we drink, as we go, the luminous tides
In our ruddy air and our blooming sides :
Lo, yonder the living splendors play ·
Away, on our joyous path, away !

“ Look, look, through our glittering ranks afar,
In the infinite azure, star after star,
How they brighten and bloom as they swiftly
pass !

How the verdure runs o'er each rolling mass !
And the path of the gentle winds is seen,
Where the small waves dance, and the young
woods lean.

“ And see, where the brighter day-beams pour,
How the rainbows hang in the sunny shower ;
And the morn and eve, with their pomp of hues,
Shift o'er the bright planets and shed their
dews ;

And 'twixt them both, o'er the teeming ground,
With their shadowy cone the night goes round !

“ Away, away ! in our blossoming bowers,
In the soft air wrapping these spheres of ours,
In the seas and fountains that shine with morn,
See, Love is brooding, and Life is born,
And breathing myriads are breaking from
night,
To rejoice like us, in motion and light.

“ Glide on in your beauty, ye youthful spheres,
To weave the dance that measures the years ;

Glide on, in the glory and gladness sent,
To the farthest wall of the firmament,—
The boundless visible smile of Him,
To the veil of whose brow your lamps are dim.”

“NO MAN KNOWETH HIS
SEPULCHRE.”

WHEN he, who, from the scourge of wrong,
Aroused the Hebrew tribes to fly,
Saw the fair region, promised long,
And bowed him on the hills to die;

God made his grave, to men unknown,
Where Moab's rocks a vale infold,
And laid the aged seer alone
To slumber while the world grows old.

Thus still, whene'er the good and just
Close the dim eye on life and pain,
Heaven watches o'er their sleeping dust,
Till the pure spirit comes again.

Though nameless, trampled, and forgot,
His servant's humble ashes lie,
Yet God has marked and sealed the spot,
To call its inmates to the sky.

“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN.”

OH, deem not they are blest alone
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep ;
The Power who pities man, has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears ;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night ;
And grief may bide, an evening guest,
But joy shall come with early light.

And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low bier
Sheddest the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere,
Will give him to thy arms again.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,
Though with a pierced and bleeding heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear,
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here.

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of
the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and
meadows brown and sear.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the with-
ered leaves lie dead ;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the
rabbit's tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from
the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow, through
all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers,
that lately sprang and stood
In brighter light and softer air, a beauteous
sisterhood ?

DEATH OF THE FLOWERS. 119

Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle
 race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and
 good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold
 November rain,
Calls not, from out the gloomy earth, the lovely
 ones again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished
 long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the
 summer glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in
 the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in
 autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as
 falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone,
 from upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as
 still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their
 winter home;

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard,
 though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of
 the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose
 fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the
 stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful
 beauty died,
The fair, meek blossom that grew up and faded
 by my side;
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the
 forest cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a
 life so brief:
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young
 friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with
 the flowers.

TO A WATERFOWL.

WHITHER, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of
day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way ?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side ?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near,

And soon that toil shall end ;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall
 bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form ; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain
 flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

THE BATTLE-FIELD.

ONCE this soft turf, this rivulet's sands,
 Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,
And fiery hearts and armed hands
 Encountered in the battle cloud.

Ah ! never shall the land forget
 How gushed the life-blood of her brave—

Gushed, warm with hope and valor yet,
Upon the soil they fought to save.

Now all is calm and fresh and still,
Alone the chirp of flitting bird,
And talk of children on the hill,
And bell of wandering kine, are heard.

No solemn host goes trailing by
The black-mouthed gun and staggering wain ;
Men start not at the battle cry ;
Oh, be it never heard again !

Soon rested those who fought—but thou,
Who minglest in the harder strife
For truths which men receive not now,
Thy warfare only ends with life.

A friendless warfare ! lingering long
Through weary day and weary year ;
A wild and many-weaponed throng
Hang on thy front and flank and rear.

Yet nerve thy spirit to the proof,
And blench not at thy chosen lot ;
The timid good may stand aloof,
The sage may frown—yet faint thou not !

Nor heed the shaft too surely cast,
The hissing, stinging bolt of scorn.
For with thy side shall dwell, at last,
The victory of endurance born.

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again ;
The eternal years of God are hers ;
But Error, wounded, writhes with pain,
And dies among his worshippers.

Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,
When those who helped thee flee in fear,
Die full of hope and manly trust,
Like those who fell in battle here.

Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another hand the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o'er thy grave !

THE WINDS.

YE winds, ye unseen currents of the air,
Softly ye played a few brief hours ago ;
Ye bore the murmuring bee ; ye tossed the hair
O'er maiden cheeks, that took a fresher glow ;

Ye rolled the round white cloud through depths
of blue ;

Ye shook from shaded flowers the lingering dew ;
Before you the catalpa's blossoms flew,

Light blossoms, dropping on the grass like
snow.

How are ye changed ! Ye take the cataract's
sound ;

Ye take the whirlpool's fury and its might ;
The mountain shudders as ye sweep the ground ;
The valley woods lie prone beneath your
flight.

The clouds before you shoot like eagles past ;
The homes of men are rocking in your blast ;
Ye lift the roofs like autumn leaves, and cast,
Skyward, the whirling fragments out of sight.

The weary fowls of heaven make wing in vain,
To 'scape your wrath ; ye seize and dash
them dead.

Against the earth ye drive the roaring rain ;
The harvest field becomes a river's bed ;
And torrents tumble from the hills around,
Plains turn to lakes, and villages are drowned,
And wailing voices, 'midst the tempest's sound,
Rise, as the rushing waters swell and spread.

Ye dart upon the deep, and straight is heard
A wilder roar, and men grow pale, and pray ;
Ye fling its floods around you, as a bird
Flings o'er his shivering plumes the fountain's
spray.

See! to the breaking mast the sailor clings ;
Ye scoop the ocean to its briny springs,
And take the mountain billow on your wings,
And pile the wreck of navies round the bay.

Why rage ye thus?—no strife for liberty
Has made you mad; no tyrant, strong
through fear,
Has chained your pinions till ye wrenched
them free,
And rushed into the unmeasured atmosphere :
For ye were born in freedom where ye blow ;
Free o'er the mighty deep to come and go ;
Earth's solemn woods were yours, her wastes
of snow,
Her isles where summer blossoms all the year.

O ye wild winds, a mightier Power than yours
In chains upon the shore of Europe lies ;
The sceptered throng, whose fetters he endures,
Watch his mute throes with terror in their
eyes :

And armed warriors all around him stand,
And, as he struggles, tighten every band,
And lift the heavy spear, with threatening hand,
To pierce the victim, should he strive to rise.

Yet oh, when that wronged Spirit of our race
Shall break, as soon he must, his long-worn
chains,
And leap in freedom from his prison-place,
Lord of his ancient hills and fruitful plains,
Let him not rise, like these mad winds of air,
To waste the loveliness that time could spare,
To fill the earth with woe, and blot her fair
Unconscious breast with blood from human
veins.

But may he like the Spring-time come abroad,
Who crumbles winter's gyves with gentle
might,
When in the genial breeze, the breath of God,
Come spouting up the unsealed springs to light ;
Flowers start from their dark prisons at his feet,
The woods, long dumb, await to hymnings
sweet,
And morn and eve, whose glimmerings almost
meet,
Crowd back to narrow bounds the ancient
night.

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS.

HERE we halt our march, and pitch our tent,
On the rugged forest ground,
And light our fire with the branches rent,
By winds from the beeches round.
Wild storms have torn this ancient wood,
But a wilder is at hand,
With hail of iron and rain of blood,
To sweep and scath the land.

How the bark waste rings with voices shrill,
That startle the sleeping bird,
To-morrow eve must the voice be still,
And the step must fall unheard.
The Briton lies by the blue Champlain,
In Ticonderoga's towers,
And ere the sun rise twice again,
The towers and the lake are ours.

Fill up the bowl from the brook that glides,
Where the fireflies light the brake ;
A ruddier juice the Briton hides,
In his fortress by the lake.
Build high the fire, till the panther leap
From his lofty perch in fright,
And we'll strengthen our weary arms with sleep,
For the deeds of to-morrow night.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

How shall I know thee in the sphere which
keeps

The disembodied spirits of the dead,
When all of thee that time could wither sleeps
And perishes among the dust we tread?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
If there I meet thy gentle presence not;
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.

Will not thy own meek heart demand me there?
That heart whose fondest throbs to me were
given?
My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
Shall it be banished from thy tongue in
heaven?

In meadows fanned by heaven's life-breathing
wind,
In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,
And larger movements of the unfettered mind,
Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here?

The love that lived through all the stormy past,
And meekly with my harsher nature bore,
And deeper grew, and tenderer to the last,
Shall it expire with life, and be no more?

A happier lot than mine, and larger light,
Await thee there; for thou hast bowed thy
will

In cheerful homage to the rule of right,
And lovest all, and renderest good for ill.

For me, the sordid cares in which I dwell,
Shrink and consume my heart, as heat the
scroll;
And wrath hath left its scar—that fire of hell
Has left its frightful scar upon my soul.

Yet, though thou wear'st the glory of the sky,
Wilt thou not keep the same beloved name,
The same fair thoughtful brow, and gentle eye,
Lovelier in heaven's sweet climate, yet the
same?

Shalt thou not teach me, in that calmer home,
The wisdom that I learned so ill in this—
The wisdom which is love—till I become
Thy fit companion in that land of bliss?

THE OLD MAN'S COUNSEL.

AMONG our hills and valleys, I have known
Wise and grave men, who, while their diligent
hands

Tendered or gathered in the fruits of earth,
Were reverent learners in the solemn school
Of nature. Not in vain to them were sent
Seed-time and harvest, or the vernal shower
That darkened the brown tilth, or snow that
beat

On the white winter hills. Each brought, in
turn,

Some truth, some lesson on the life of man,
Or recognition of the Eternal mind
Who veils his glory with the elements.

One such I knew long since, a white-haired
man,

Pithy of speech, and merry when he would ;
A genial optimist, who daily drew
From what he saw his quaint moralities.
Kindly he held communion, though so old,
With me a dreaming boy, and taught me
much

That books tell not, and I shall ne'er forget.

The sun of May was bright in middle heaven,
And steeped the sprouting forests, the green
hills

And emerald wheat-fields, in his yellow light.
Upon the apple-tree, where rosy buds
Stood clustered, ready to burst forth in bloom,
The robin warbled forth his full clear note
For hours, and wearied not. Within the
woods,

Whose young and half transparent leaves scarce
cast

A shade, gay circles of anemones
Danced on their stalks; the shadbush, white
with flowers,

Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butter-
nut

And quivering poplar to the roving breeze
Gave a balsamic fragrance. In the fields
I saw the pulses of the gentle wind
On the young grass. My heart was touched
with joy

At so much beauty, flushing every hour
Into a fuller beauty; but my friend,
The thoughtful ancient, standing at my side,
Gazed on it mildly sad. I asked him why.





“Well may'st thou join in gladness,” he replied,
“With the glad earth, her springing plants and flowers,
And this soft wind, the herald of the green
Luxuriant summer. Thou art young like them,
And well may'st thou rejoice. But while the flight
Of seasons fills and knits thy spreading frame,
It withers mine, and thins my hair, and dims
These eyes, whose fading light shall soon be quenched
In utter darkness. Hearest thou that bird?”

I listened, and from 'midst the depth of woods
Heard the love-signal of the grouse, that wears
A sable ruff around his mottled neck;
Partridge they call him by our northern streams,
And pheasant by the Delaware. He beat
'Gainst his barred sides his speckled wings, and made
A sound like distant thunder; slow the strokes
At first, then faster and faster, till at length
They passed into a murmur and were still.

“There hast thou,” said my friend, “a fitting type

Of human life. 'Tis an old truth, I know,
But images like these revive the power
Of long familiar truths. Slow pass our days
In childhood, and the hours of light are long
Betwixt the morn and eve ; with swifter lapse
They glide in manhood, and in age they fly ;
Till days and seasons flit before the mind
As flit the snow-flakes in a winter storm,
Seen rather than distinguished. Ah ! I seem
As if I sat within a helpless bark,
By swiftly running waters hurried on
To shoot some mighty cliff. Along the banks
Grove after grove, rock after frowning rock,
Bare sands and pleasant homes, and flowery
nooks,

And isles and whirlpools in the stream, appear
Each after each, but the devoted skiff
Darts by so swiftly that their images
Dwell not upon the mind, or only dwell
In dim confusion ; faster yet I sweep
By other banks and the great gulf is near.

“Wisely, my son, while yet thy days are
long,
And this fair change of seasons passes slow,

Gather and treasure up the good they yield—
All that they teach of virtue, of pure thoughts
And kind affections, reverence for thy God
And for thy brethren ; so when thou shalt come
Into these barren years, thou may'st not bring
A mind unfurnished and a withered heart.''

Long since that white-haired ancient slept—
but still,
When the red flower-buds crowd the orchard
bough,
And the ruffed grouse is drumming far within
The woods, his venerable form again
Is at my side, his voice is in my ear.

AN EVENING REVERIE.

(FROM AN UNFINISHED POEM.)

THE summer day is closed—the sun is set :
Well they have done their office, those bright
hours,
The latest of whose train goes softly out
In the red West. The green blade of the
ground
Has risen, and herds have cropped it ; the
young twig

Has spread its plaited tissues to the sun ;
Flowers of the garden and the waste have
blown

And withered ; seeds have fallen upon the soil,
From bursting cells, and in their graves await
Their resurrection. Insects from the pools
Have filled the air awhile with humming wings,
That now are still forever ; painted moths
Have wandered the blue sky, and died again ;
The mother-bird hath broken, for her brood,
Their prison shell, or shoved them from the
nest,

Plumed for their earliest flight. In bright
alcoves,

In woodland cottages with barky walls,
In noisome cells of the tumultuous town,
Mothers have clasped with joy the new-born
babe.

Graves by the lonely forest, by the shore
Of rivers and of ocean, by the ways
Of the thronged city, have been hollowed out
And filled, and closed. This day hath parted
friends

That ne'er before were parted ; it hath knit
New friendships ; it hath seen the maiden
plight

Her faith, and trust her peace to him who long

Had wooed ; and it hath heard, from lips which
late

Were eloquent of love, the first harsh word,
That told the wedded one her peace was flown.
Farewell to the sweet sunshine ! One glad day
Is added now to Childhood's merry days,
And one calm day to those of quiet Age.
Still the fleet hours run on ; and as I lean,
Amid the thickening darkness, lamps are lit,
By those who watch the dead, and those who
twine

Flowers for the bride. The mother from the
eyes

Of her sick infant shades the painful light,
And sadly listens to his quick-drawn breath.

Oh thou great Movement of the Universe,
Or Change, or Flight of Time—for ye are
one !

That bearest, silently, this visible scene
Into night's shadow and the streaming rays
Of starlight, whither art thou bearing me ?
I feel the mighty current sweep me on,
Yet know not whither. Man foretells afar
The courses of the stars ; the very hour
He knows when they shall darken or grow
bright ;

Yet doth the eclipse of Sorrow and of Death

Come unforewarned. Who next, of those I
love,

Shall pass from life, or, sadder yet, shall fall
From virtue? Strife with foes, or bitterer strife
With friends, or shame and general scorn of
men—

Which who can bear?—or the fierce rank of
pain,

Lie they within my path? Or shall the years
Push me, with soft and inoffensive pace,
Into the stilly twilight of my age?
Or do the portals of another life
Even now, while I am glorying in my strength,
Impend around me? Oh! beyond that bourne,
In the vast cycle of being which begins
At that dread threshold, with what fairer forms
Shall the great law of change and progress
clothe

Its workings? Gently—so have good men
taught—

Gently, and without grief, the old shall glide
Into the new; the eternal flow of things,
Like a bright river of the fields of heaven,
Shall journey onward in perpetual peace.

THE ANTIQUITY OF FREEDOM.

HERE are old trees, tall oaks and gnarled
pines,
That stream with gray-green mosses ; here the
ground
Was never trenched by spade, and flowers
spring up
Unsown, and die ungathered. It is sweet
To linger here, among the flitting birds,
And leaping squirrels, wandering brooks, and
winds
That shake the leaves, and scatter as they pass,
A fragrance from the cedars, thickly set
With pale blue berries. In these peaceful
shades—
Peaceful, unpruned, immeasurably old—
My thoughts go up the long dim path of years,
Back to the earliest days of liberty.

Oh FREEDOM ! thou art not, as poets dream,
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his
slave
When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
Armed to the teeth, art thou ; one mailed hand

Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword ;
thy brow,

Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
With tokens of old wars ; thy massive limbs
Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has
launched

His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee ;
They could not quench the life thou hast from
heaven.

Merciless power has dug thy dungeon deep,
And his swart armorers, by a thousand fires,
Have forged thy chain ; yet, while he deems
thee bound,

The links are shivered, and the prison walls
Fall outward : terribly thou springest forth,
As springs the flame above a burning pile,
And shoutest to the nations, who return
Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies.

Thy birthright was not given by human
hands :
Thou wert twin-born with man. In pleasant
fields,
While yet our race was few, thou sat'st with
him,
To tend the quiet flock and watch the stars,
And teach the reed to utter simple airs.

Thou by his side, amid the tangled wood,
Didst war upon the panther and the wolf,
His only foes ; and thou with him didst draw
The earliest furrows on the mountain side,
Soft with the deluge. Tyranny himself,
Thy enemy, although of reverend look,
Hoary with many years, and far obeyed,
Is later born than thou ; and as he meets
The grave defiance of thine elder eye,
The usurper trembles in his fastnesses.

Thou shalt wax stronger with the lapse of
years,
But he shall fade into a feeblar age ;
Feebler, yet subtler. He shall weave his snares,
And spring them on thy careless steps, and clap
His withered hands, and from their ambush call
His hordes to fall upon thee. He shall send
Quaint maskers, forms of fair and gallant mien,
To catch thy gaze, and uttering graceful words
To charm thy ear ; while his sly imps, by
stealth,
Twine around thee threads of steel, light thread
on thread,
That grow to fetters ; or bind down thy arms
With chains concealed in chaplets. Oh ! not
yet

May'st thou unbrace thy corselet, nor lay by
Thy sword ; nor yet, O Freedom ! close thy lids
In slumber ; for thine enemy never sleeps,
And thou must watch and combat till the day
Of the new earth and heaven. But wouldst
thou rest

Awhile from tumult and the frauds of men,
These old and friendly solitudes invite
Thy visit. They, while yet the forest trees
Were young upon the unviolated earth,
And yet the moss-stains on the rock were new,
Beheld thy glorious childhood, and rejoiced.

A HYMN OF THE SEA.

THE sea is mighty, but a mightier sways
His restless billows. Thou whose hands have
scooped
His boundless gulfs and built his shore, thy
breath,
That moved in the beginning o'er his face,
Moves o'er it evermore. The obedient waves
To its strong motion roll, and rise and fall.
Still from that realm of rain thy cloud goes up,
As at the first, to water the great earth,
And keep her valleys green. A hundred realms

Watch its broad shadow warping on the wind,
And in the dropping shower, with gladness hear
Thy promise of the harvest. I look forth
Over the boundless blue, where joyously
The bright crests of innumerable waves
Glance to the sun at once, as when the hands
Of a great multitude are upward flung
In acclamation. I behold the ships
Gliding from cape to cape, from isle to isle,
Or stemming toward far lands, or hastening
home
From the Old World. It is thy friendly breeze
That bears them, with the riches of the land,
And treasure of dear lives, till, in the port,
The shouting seaman climbs and furls the sail.

But who shall bide thy tempest, who shall
face
The blast that wakes the fury of the sea?
Oh God! thy justice makes the world turn pale,
When on the armed fleet, that royally
Bears down the surges, carrying war, to smite
Some city, or invade some thoughtless realm,
Descends the fierce tornado. The vast hulks
Are whirled like chaff upon the waves; the sails
Fly, rent like webs of gossamer; the masts

Are snapped asunder ; downward from the
decks,
Downward are slung, into the fathomless gulf,
Their cruel engines ; and their hosts, arrayed
In trappings of the battle-field, are whelmed
By whirlpools, or dashed dead upon the rocks.
Then stand the nations still with awe, and
pause,
A moment, from the bloody work of war.

These restless surges eat away the shores
Of earth's old continents ; the fertile plain
Welters in shallows, headlands crumble down,
And the tide drifts the sea-sand in the streets
Of the drowned city. Thou, meanwhile, afar
In the green chambers of the middle sea,
Where broadest spread the waters and the line
Sinks deepest, while no eye beholds thy work,
Creator ! thou dost teach the coral worm
To lay his mighty reefs. From age to age,
He builds beneath the waters, till, at last,
His bulwarks overtop the brine, and check
The long wave rolling from the southern pole
To break upon Japan. Thou bid'st the fires,
That smoulder under ocean, heave on high
The new-made mountains, and uplift their
peaks,

A place of refuge for the storm-driven bird.
The birds and wafting billows plant the rifts
With herb and tree ; sweet fountains gush ;
 sweet airs
Ripple the living lakes that, fringed with
 flowers,
Are gathered in the hollows. Thou dost look
On thy creation and pronounce it good.
Its valleys, glorious with their summer green,
Praise thee in silent beauty, and its woods,
Swept by the murmuring winds of ocean, join
The murmuring shores in a perpetual hymn.

THE STREAM OF LIFE.

OH silvery streamlet of the fields,
 That flowest full and free !
For thee the rains of spring return,
 The summer dews for thee ;
And when thy latest blossoms die
 In autumn's chilly showers,
The winter fountains gush for thee,
 Till May brings back the flowers.

Oh Stream of Life ! the violet springs
But once beside thy bed ;
But one brief summer, on thy path,
The dews of heaven are shed.
Thy parent fountains shrink away,
And close their crystal veins,
And where thy glittering current flowed
The dust alone remains.

MIDSUMMER.

(A SONNET.)

A POWER is on the earth and in the air,
From which the vital spirit shrinks afraid,
And shelters him, in nooks of deepest shade,
From the hot stream and from the fiery glare.
Look forth upon the earth—her thousand
plants
Are smitten ; even the dark sun-loving
maize
Faints in the field beneath the torrid blaze ;
The herd beside the shaded fountain pants ;
For life is driven from all the landscape brown ;
The bird has sought his tree, the snake his
den,

The trout floats dead in the hot stream, and
men
Drop by the sun-stroke in the populace town :
As if the Day of Fire had dawned, and sent
Its deadly breath into the firmament.

GREEN RIVER.

WHEN breezes are soft and skies are fair,
I steal an hour from study and care,
And hie me away to the woodland scene,
Where wanders the stream with waters of
green.
As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink
Had given their stain to the wave they drink ;
And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.

Yet pure its waters—its shallows are bright
With coloured pebbles and sparkles of light,
And clear the depths where its eddies play,
And dimples deepen and whirl away,
And the plane-tree's speckled arms o'ershoot
The swifter current that mines its root,
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk
the hill,
The quivering glimmer of sun and rill

With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,
Like the ray that streams from the diamond
stone.

Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,
With blossoms, and birds, and wild bees' hum ;
The flowers of summer are fairest there,
And freshest the breath of the summer air ;
And sweetest the golden autumn day
In silence and sunshine glides away.

Yet fair as thou art, thou shunnest to glide,
Beautiful stream ! by the village side ;
But windest away from haunts of men,
To quiet valley and shaded glen ;
And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,
Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still.
Lonely—save when, by thy rippling tides,
From thicket to thicket the angler glides ;
Or the simpler comes with basket and book,
For herbs of power on thy banks to look ;
Or haply, some idle dreamer, like me,
To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee.
Still—save the chirp of birds that feed
On the river cherry and seedy reed,
And thy own wild music gushing out
With mellow murmur and fairy shout,

From dawn to the blush of another day,
Like traveller singing along his way.

That fairy music I never hear,
Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear,
And mark them winding away from sight.
Darkened with shade or flashing with light,
While o'er them the vine to its thicket clings,
And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings,
But I wish that fate had left me free
To wander these quiet haunts with thee,
Till the eating cares of earth should depart,
And the peace of the scene pass into my heart;
And I envy thy stream, as it glides along,
Through its beautiful banks in a trance of song.

Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous
pen,
And mingle among the jostling crowd,
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud—
I often come to this quiet place,
To breathe the airs that ruffle thy face,
And gaze upon thee in silent dream,
For in thy lonely and lovely stream
An image of that calm life appears
That won my heart in my greener years.

A WINTER PIECE.

THE time has been that these wild solitudes,
Yet beautiful as wild, were trod by me
Oftener than now ; and when the ills of life
Had chafed my spirit—when the unsteady
pulse
Beat with strange flutterings—I would wander
forth
And seek the woods. The sunshine on my
path
Was to me as a friend. The swelling hills,
The quiet dells retiring far between,
With gentle invitation to explore
Their windings, were a calm society
That talked with me and soothed me. Then
the chant
Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress
Of the fresh sylvan air, made me forget
The thoughts that broke my peace, and I began
To gather simples by the fountain's brink,
And lose myself in day-dreams. While I stood
In nature's loneliness, I was with one
With whom I early grew familiar, one
Who never had a frown for me, whose voice
Never rebuked me for the hours I stole
From cares I loved not, but of which the world

Deems highest, to converse with her. When
shrieked
The bleak November winds, and smote the
woods,
And the brown fields were herbless, and the
shades,
That met above the merry rivulet,
Were spoiled, I sought, I loved them still,—
they seemed
Like old companions in adversity.
Still there was beauty in my walks; the brook,
Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as
gay
As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar,
The village with its spires, the path of streams,
And dim receding valleys, hid before
By interposing trees, lay visible
Through the bare grove, and my familiar
haunts
Seemed new to me. Nor was I slow to come
Among them, when the clouds, from their still
skirts,
Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,
And all was white. The pure keen air abroad,
Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard
Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee,
Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept

Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds,
That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,
Patient and waiting the soft breath of Spring,
Feared not the piercing spirit of the North.
The snow-bird twittered on the beechen bough,
And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches
bent

Beneath its bright cold burden, and kept dry
A circle, on the earth, of withered leaves,
The partridge found a shelter. Through the
snow

The rabbit sprang away. The lighter track
Of fox, and the racoon's broad path, were there,
Crossing each other. From his hollow tree,
The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts
Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway
Of winter blast, to shake them from their hold.

But Winter has yet brighter scenes,—he
boasts

Splendours beyond what gorgeous Summer
knows ;

Or Autumn with his many fruits, and woods
All flushed with many hues. Come when the
rains

Have glazed the snow, and clothed the trees
with ice ;

While the slant sun of February pours
Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach!
The incrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,
And the broad arching portals of the grove
Welcome thy entering. Look! the massy
trunks.

Are cased in the pure crystal; each light spray,
Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,
Is studded with its trembling water-drops,
That stream with rainbow radiance as they
move.

But round the parent stem the long low boughs
Bend, in a glittering ring, and arbours hide
The glassy floor. Oh! you might deem the
spot

The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,
Deep in the womb of earth—where the gems
grow,

And diamonds put forth radiant rods and bud
With amethyst and topaz—and the place
Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam
That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall
Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night,
And fades not in the glory of the sun;—
Where crystal columns send forth slender
shafts

And crossing arches; and fantastic aisles

Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost
Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eye,—
Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault ;
There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud
Look in. Again the wildered fancy dreams
Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,
And fixed, with all their branching jets, in air,
And all their sluices sealed. All, all is light ;
Light without shade. But all shall pass away
With the next sun. From numberless vast
trunks,

Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound
Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve
Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont.

And it is pleasant, when the noisy streams
Are just set free, and milder suns melt off
The plashy snow, save only the firm drift
In the deep glen or the close shade of pines,—
'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke
Roll up among the maples of the hill,
Where the shrill sound of youthful voices wakes
The shriller echo, as the clear pure lymph,
That from the wounded trees, in twinkling
drops,

Falls, mid the golden brightness of the morn,
Is gathered in with brimming pails, and oft,

Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of axe
Makes the woods ring. Along the quiet air,
Come and float calmly off the soft light clouds,
Such as you see in summer, and the winds
Scarce stir the branches. Lodged in sunny
cleft,

Where the cold breezes come not, blooms alone
The little-wind flower, whose just opened eye
Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at—
Startling the loiterer in the naked groves
With unexpected beauty, for the time
Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar.
And ere it comes, the encountering winds shall
oft

Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds
Shade heaven, and bounding on the frozen
earth

Shall fall their volleyed stores rounded like
hail,

And white like snow, and the loud North again
Shall buffet the vexed forest in his rage.

HYMN TO DEATH.

OH! could I hope the wise and pure in heart
Might hear my song without a frown, nor deem
My voice unworthy of the theme it tries,—

I would take up the hymn to Death, and say
To the grim power, The world hath slandered
thee

And mocked thee. On thy dim and shadowy
brow

They place an iron crown, and call thee king
Of terrors, and the spoiler of the world,
Deadly assassin, that strik'st down the fair,
The loved, the good—that breathest on the
lights

Of virtue set along the vale of life,
And they go out in darkness. I am come,
Not with reproaches, not with cries and prayers,
Such as have stormed thy stern, insensible ear
From the beginning. I am come to speak
Thy praises. True it is, that I have wept
Thy conquests, and may weep them yet again:
And thou from some I love wilt take a life
Dear to me as my own. Yet while the spell
Is on my spirit, and I talk with thee
In sight of all thy trophies, face to face,
Meet is it that my voice should utter forth
Thy nobler triumphs; I will teach the world
To thank thee.—Who are thine accusers?—
Who?

The living!—they who never felt thy power,
And know thee not. The curses of the wretch

Whose crimes are ripe, his sufferings when thy
hand

Is on him, and the hour he dreads is come,
Are writ among thy praises. But the good—
Does he whom thy kind hand dismissed to
peace,

Upbraid the gentle violence that took off
His fetters, and unbarred his prison cell?

Raise then the hymn to death. Deliverer!
God hath anointed thee to free the oppressed
And crush the oppressor. When the armed
chief,

The conqueror of nations, walks the world,
And it is changed beneath his feet, and all
Its kingdoms melt into one mighty realm—
Thou, while his head is loftiest and his heart
Blasphemes, imagining his own right hand
Almighty, thou dost set thy sudden grasp
Upon him, and the links of that strong chain
That bound mankind are crumbled; thou dost
break

Sceptre and crown, and beat his throne to dust.
Then the earth shouts with gladness, and her
tribes

Gather within their ancient bounds again.
Else had the mighty of the olden time,

Nimrod, Sesostris, or the youth who feigned
His birth from Libyan Ammon, smitten yet
The nations with a rod of iron, and driven
Their chariot o'er our necks. Thou dost
 avenge,
In thy good time, the wrongs of those who
 know
No other friend. Nor dost thou interpose
Only to lay the sufferer asleep,
Where he who made him wretched troubles
 not
His rest—thou dost strike down his tyrant too.
Oh, there is joy when hands that held the
 scourge
Drop lifeless, and the pitiless heart is cold
Thou too dost purge from earth its horrible
And old idolatries ;—from the proud fanes
Each to his grave their priests go out, till none
Is left to teach their worship ; then the fires
Of sacrifice are chilled, and the green moss
O'ercreeeps their altars ; the fallen images
Cumber the weedy courts, and for loud hymns,
Chanted by kneeling multitudes, the wind
Shrieks in the solitary aisles. When he
Who gives his life to guilt, and laughs at all
The laws that God or man has made, and
 round

Hedges his seat with power, and shines in
wealth,—

Lifts up his atheist front to scoff at Heaven,
And celebrates his shame in open day,
Thou, in the pride of all his crimes, cutt'st off
The horrible example. Touched by thine,
The extortioner's hard hand foregoes the gold
Wrung from the o'er-worn poor. The perjurer,
Whose tongue was lithe, e'en now, and voluble
Against his neighbour's life, and he who
laughed

And leaped for joy to see a spotless fame
Blasted before his own foul calumnies,
Are smit with deadly silence. He, who sold
His conscience to preserve a worthless life,
Even while he hugs himself on his escape,
Trembles, as, doubly terrible, at length,
Thy steps o'ertake him, and there is no time
For parley—nor will bribes unclench thy grasp.
Oft, too, dost thou reform thy victim, long
Ere his last hour. And when the reveller,
Mad in the chase of pleasure, stretches on,
And strains each nerve, and clears the path of
life

Like wind, thou point'st him to the dreadful
goal,
And shak'st thy hour-glass in his reeling-eye,

And check'st him in mid course. Thy skeleton
hand

Shows to the faint of spirit the right path,
And he is warned, and fears to step aside.
Thou sett'st between the ruffian and his crime
Thy ghastly countenance, and his slack hand
Drops the drawn knife. But, oh, most fearfully
Dost thou show forth Heaven's justice, when
thy shafts

Drink up the ebbing spirit—then the hard
Of heart and violent of hand restores
The treasure to the friendless wretch he
wronged.

Then from the writhing bosom thou dost pluck
The guilty secret; lips, for ages sealed,
Are faithless to the dreadful trust at length,
And give it up; the felon's latest breath
Absolves the innocent man who bears his
crime;

The slanderer, horror-smitten, and in tears,
Recalls the deadly obloquy he forged
To work his brother's ruin. Thou dost make
Thy penitent victim utter to the air
The dark conspiracy that strikes at life,
And aims to whelm the laws; ere yet the hour
Is come, and the dread sign of murder given.

Thus, from the first of time, hast thou been
found

On virtue's side ! the wicked, but for thee,
Had been too strong for the good ; the great of
earth

Had crushed the weak for ever. Schooled in
guile

For ages, while each passing year had brought
Its baneful lesson, they had filled the world
With their abominations ; while its tribes,
Trodden to earth, imbruted, and despoiled,
Had knelt to them in worship ; sacrifice
Had smoked on many an altar, temple roofs
Had echoed with the blasphemous prayer and
hymn :

But thou, the great reformer of the world,
Tak'st off the sons of violence and fraud
In their green pupilage, their lore half learned—
Ere guilt had quite o'errun the simple heart
God gave them at their birth, and blotted out
His image. Thou dost mark them flushed with
hope,

As on the threshold of their vast designs
Doubtful and loose they stand, and strik'st them
down.

* * * * *

Alas ! I little thought that the stern power
Whose fearful praise I sung, would try me thus
Before the strain was ended. It must cease—
For he is in his grave who taught my youth
The art of verse, and in the bud of life
Offered me to the muses. Oh, cut off
Untimely ! when thy reason in its strength,
Ripened by years of toil and studious search,
And watch of Nature's silent lessons, taught
Thy hand to practice best the lenient art,
To which thou gavest thy laborious days,
And, last, thy life. And, therefore, when the
earth
Received thee, tears were in unyielding eyes
And on hard cheeks, and they who deemed thy
skill
Delayed their death-hour, shuddered and turned
pale
When thou wert gone. This faltering verse,
which thou
Shalt not, as wont, o'erlook, is all I have
To offer at thy grave—this—and the hope
To copy thy example, and to leave
A name of which the wretched shall not think
As of an enemy's, whom they forgive
As all forgive the dead. Rest, therefore, thou
Whose early guidance trained my infant steps—

Rest, in the bosom of God, till the brief sleep
Of death is over, and a happier life
Shall dawn to waken thine insensible dust.

Now thou art not—and yet the men whose
 guilt
Has wearied Heaven for vengeance—he who
 bears
False witness—he who takes the orphan's bread,
And robs the widow—he who spreads abroad
Polluted hands of mockery of prayer,
Are left to cumber earth. Shuddering I look
On what is written, yet I blot not out
The desultory numbers—let them stand,
The record of an idle revery.

LINES ON REVISITING THE COUNTRY.

I STAND upon my native hills again,
 Broad, round, and green, that in the sum-
 mer sky
With garniture of waving grass and grain,
 Orchards, and beechen forests, basking lie,
While deep the sunless glens are scooped be-
 tween,
Where brawl o'er shallow beds the streams un-
 seen.

A lisping voice and glancing eyes are near,
And ever restless feet of one, who, now,
Gathers the blossoms of her fourth bright year;
There plays a gladness o'er her fair young
brow,
As breaks the varied scene upon her sight,
Upheaved and spread in verdure and in light.

For I have taught her, with delighted eye,
To gaze upon the mountains,—to behold,
With deep affection, the pure ample sky,
And clouds along its blue abysses rolled,—
To love the song of waters, and to hear
The melody of winds with charmed ear.

Here, I have 'scaped the city's stifling heat,
Its horrid sounds, and its polluted air;
And, where the season's milder fervours beat,
And gales, that sweep the forest borders,
bear
The song of bird, and sound of running stream,
Am come awhile to wander and to dream.

Ay, flame thy fiercest, sun! thou canst not
wake,
In this pure air the plague that walks un-
seen.

MOUNTAIN'S DISTANT HEAD. 165

The maize leaf and the maple bough but take,
From thy strong heats, a deeper, glossier
green.

The mountain wind, that faints not in thy ray,
Sweeps the blue streams of pestilence away.

The mountain wind ! most spiritual thing of all
The wide earth knows ; when, in the sultry
time,

He stoops him from his vast cerulean hall,
He seems the breath of a celestial clime !
As if from heaven's wide-open gates did flow
Health and refreshment on the world below.

“UPON THE MOUNTAIN'S DISTANT
HEAD.”

UPON the mountain's distant head,
With trackless snows for ever white,
Where all is still, and cold, and dead,
Late shines the day's departing light.

But far below those icy rocks,
The vales, in summer bloom arrayed,
Woods full of birds, and fields of flocks,
Are dim with mist and dark with shade.

'Tis thus, from warm and kindly hearts,
And eyes where generous meanings burn,
Earliest the light of life departs,
But lingers with the cold and stern.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

BENEATH the waning moon I walk at night,
And muse on human life—for all around
Are dim uncertain shapes that cheat the sight,
And pitfalls lurk in shade along the ground,
And broken gleams of brightness, here and
there,
Glance through, and leave unwarmed the
death-like air.

The trampled earth returns a sound of fear—
A hollow sound, as if I walked on tombs;
And lights, that tell of cheerful homes, appear
Far off, and die like hope amid the glooms.
A mournful wind across the landscape flies,
And the wide atmosphere is full of sighs.

And I, with faltering footsteps, journey on,
Watching the stars that roll the hours away,

Till the faint light that guides me now is gone,
And, like another life, the glorious day
Shall open o'er me from the empyreal height,
With warmth, and certainty, and boundless
light.

LOVE AND FOLLY.

(FROM LA FONTAINE.)

LOVE's worshippers alone can know
The thousand mysteries that are his;
His blazing torch, his twanging bow,
His blooming age are mysteries.
A charming science—but the day
Were all too short to con it o'er;
So take of me this little lay,
A sample of its boundless lore.

As once, beneath the fragrant shade
Of myrtles breathing heaven's own air,
The children, Love and Folly, played—
A quarrel rose betwixt the pair.
Love said the gods should do him right—
But Folly vowed to do it then,
And struck him, o'er the orbs of sight,
So hard he never saw again.

His lovely mother's grief was deep,
She called for vengeance on the deed ;
A beauty does not vainly weep,
Nor coldly does a mother plead.
A shade came o'er the eternal bliss
That fills the dwellers of the skies ;
Even stony-hearted Nemesis,
And Rhadamanthus, wiped their eyes.

"Behold," she said, "this lovely boy,"
While streamed afresh her graceful tears,
"Immortal, yet shut out from joy
And sunshine, all his future years.
The child can never take, you see,
A single step without a staff—
The harshest punishment would be
Too lenient for the crime by half."

All said that Love had suffered wrong,
And well that wrong should be repaid ;
Then weighed the public interest long,
And long the party's interest weighed.
And thus decreed the court above—
"Since Love is blind from Folly's blow,
Let Folly be the guide of Love,
Where'er the boy may choose to go."

THE LOVE OF GOD.

(FROM THE PROVENÇAL OF BERNARD RASCAS.)

ALL things that are on earth shall wholly
pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and
last for aye.
The forms of men shall be as they had never
been ;
The blasted groves shall lose their fresh and
tender green ;
The birds of the thicket shall end their pleasant
song,
And the nightingale shall cease to chant the
evening long.
The kine of the pasture shall feel the dart that
kills,
And all the fair white flocks shall perish from
the hills.
The goat and antlered stag, the wolf and the
fox,
The wild boar of the wood, and the chamois of
the rocks,
And the strong and fearless bear, in the trodden
dust shall lie ;
And the dolphin of the sea, and the mighty
whale, shall die.

And realms shall be dissolved, and empires be
no more,
And they shall bow to death, who ruled from
shore to shore ;
And the great globe itself, (so the holy writings
tell,)
With the rolling firmament, where the starry
armies dwell,
Shall melt with fervent heat—they shall all
pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and
last for aye.

EARTH.

A MIDNIGHT black with clouds is in the sky ;
I seem to feel, upon my limbs, the weight
Of its vast brooding shadow. All in vain
Turns the tired eye in search of form ; no star
Pierces the pitchy veil ; no ruddy blaze,
From dwellings lighted by the cheerful hearth,
Tinges the flowering summits of the grass.
No sound of life is heard, no village hum,
Nor measured tramp of footstep in the path,
Nor rush of wing, while, on the breast of Earth,
I lie and listen to her mighty voice :

A voice of many tones—sent up from streams
That wander through the gloom, from woods
unseen,
Swayed by the sweeping of the tides of air,
From rocky chasms where darkness dwells all
day,
And hollows of the great invisible hills,
And sands that edge the ocean, stretching far
Into the night—a melancholy sound !

O Earth ! dost thou too sorrow for the past
Like man thy offspring ? Do I hear thee mourn
Thy childhood's unreturning hours, thy springs
Gone with their genial airs and melodies,
The gentle generations of thy flowers,
And thy majestic groves of olden time,
Perished with all their dwellers ? Dost thou
wail

For that fair age of which the poets tell,
Ere the rude winds grew keen with frost, or fire
Fell with the rains, or spouted from the hills,
To blast thy greenness, while the virgin night
Was guiltless and salubrious as the day ?
Or haply dost thou grieve for those that die—
For living things that trod thy paths awhile,
The love of thee and heaven—and now they
sleep

Mixed with the shapeless dust on which thy
herds
Trample and graze? I too must grieve with
thee,
O'er loved ones lost. Their graves are far
away
Upon thy mountains; yet, while I recline
Alone, in darkness, on thy naked soil,
The mighty nourisher and burial-place
Of man, I feel that I embrace their dust.

Ha! how the murmur deepens! I perceive
And tremble at its dreadful import. Earth
Uplifts a general cry for guilt and wrong,
And heaven is listening. The forgotten graves
Of the heart-broken utter forth their plaint.
The dust of her who loved and was betrayed,
And him who died neglected in his age;
The sepulchres of those who for mankind
Laboured, and earned the recompense of scorn;
Ashes of martyrs for the truth, and bones
Of those who, in the strife for liberty,
Were beaten down, their corse given to dogs,
Their names to infamy, all find a voice.
The nook in which the captive, overtoiled,
Lay down to rest at last, and that which holds

Childhood's sweet blossoms, crushed by cruel
hands,
Send up a plaintive sound. From battle-fields,
Where heroes madly drave and dashed their
hosts
Against each other, rises up a noise,
As if the armed multitudes of dead
Stirred in their heavy slumber. Mournful tones
Come from the green abysses of the sea—
A story of the crimes the guilty sought
To hide beneath its waves. The glens, the
groves,
Paths in the thicket, pools of running brook,
And banks and depths of lake, and streets and
lanes
Of cities, now that living sounds are hushed,
Murmur of guilty force and treachery.

Here, where I rest, the vales of Italy
Are round me, populous from early time,
And field of the tremendous warfare waged
'Twixt good and evil. Who, alas, shall dare
Interpret to man's ear the mingled voice
That comes from her old dungeons yawning now
To the black air, her amphitheatres,
Where the dew gathers on the mouldering
stones,

And fanes of banished gods, and open tombs,
And roofless palaces, and streets and hearths
Of cities dug from their volcanic graves?
I hear a sound of many languages,
The utterance of nations now no more,
Driven out by mightier, as the days of heaven
Chase one another from the sky. The blood
Of freemen shed by freemen, till strange lords
Came in the hour of weakness, and made fast
The yoke that yet is worn, cries out to Heaven.

What then shall cleanse thy bosom, gentle
Earth,
From all its painful memories of guilt?
The whelming flood, or the renewing fire,
Or the slow change of time? that so, at last,
The horrid tale of perjury and strife,
Murder and spoil, which men call history,
May seem a fable, like the inventions told
By poets of the gods of Greece. O thou,
Who sittest far beyond the Atlantic deep,
Among the sources of thy glorious streams,
My native Land of Groves! a newer page
In the great record of the world is thine;
Shall it be fairer? Fear, and friendly hope,
And envy, watch the issue, while the lines,
By which thou shalt be judged, are written
down.

CATTERSKILL FALLS.

MIDST greens and shades the Catterskill leaps,
From cliffs where the wood-flower clings ;
All summer he moistens his verdant steeps
With the sweet light spray of the mountain
springs ;
And he shakes the woods on the mountain side,
When they drip with the rains of autumn-tide.

But when, in the forest bare and old,
The blast of December calls,
He builds, in the starlight clear and cold,
A palace of ice where his torrent falls,
With turret, and arch, and fretwork fair,
And pillars blue as the summer air.

For whom are those glorious chambers wrought,
In the cold and cloudless night ?
Is there neither spirit nor motion of thought
In forms so lovely, and hues so bright ?
Hear what the gray-haired woodmen tell
Of this wild stream and its rocky dell.

'Twas hither a youth of dreamy mood,
A hundred winters ago,
Had wandered over the mighty wood,

When the panther's track was fresh on the
 snow,
And keen were the winds that came to stir
The long dark boughs of the hemlock fir.

Too gentle of mien he seemed and fair,
 For a child of those rugged steeps ;
His home lay low in the valley where
 The kingly Hudson rolls to the deeps ;
But he wore the hunter's frock that day,
And a slender gun on his shoulder lay.

And here he paused, and against the trunk
 Of a tall gray linden leant,
When the broad clear orb of the sun had sunk
 From his path in the frosty firmament,
And over the round dark edge of the hill
A cold green light was quivering still.

And the crescent moon, high over the green,
 From a sky of crimson shone,
On that icy palace, whose towers were seen
 To sparkle as if with stars of their own ;
While the water fell with a hollow sound,
'Twixt the glistening pillars ranged around.

Is that a being of life, that moves
 Where the crystal battlements rise ?

A maiden watching the moon she loves,
At the twilight hour, with pensive eyes ?
Was that a garment which seemed to gleam
Betwixt the eye and the falling stream ?

'Tis only the torrent tumbling o'er,
In the midst of those glassy walls,
Gushing, and plunging, and beating the fl ~~for~~
Of the rocky basin in which it falls.
'Tis only the torrent—but why that start ?
Why gazes the youth with a throbbing heart ?

He thinks no more of his home afar,
Where his sire and sister wait.
He heeds no longer how star after star
Looks forth on the night as the hour grows
late.

He heeds not the snow-wreaths, lifted and cast
From a thousand boughs, by the rising blast.

His thoughts are alone of those who dwell
In the halls of frost and snow,
Who pass where the crystal domes upswell
From the alabaster floors below,
Where the frost-trees shoot with leaf and spray,
And frost-gems scatter a silvery day.

"And oh that those glorious haunts were mine !"

He speaks, and throughout the glen
Thin shadows swim in the faint moonshine,
And take a ghastly likeness of men,
As if the slain by the wintry storms
Came forth to the air in their earthly forms.

There pass the chasers of seal and whale,
With their weapons quaint and grim,
And bands of warriors in glittering mail,
And herdsmen and hunters huge of limb.
There are naked arms, with bow and spear,
And furry gauntlets the carbine rear.

There are mothers—and oh how sadly their
eyes
On their children's white brows rest !
There are youthful lovers—the maiden lies,
In a seeming sleep, on the chosen breast ;
There are fair wan women with moonstruck air,
The snow stars flecking their long loose hair.

They eye him not as they pass along,
But his hair stands up with dread,
When he feels that he moves with that phan-
tom throng,
Till those icy turrets are over his head,

And the torrent's roar as they enter seems
Like a drowsy murmur heard in dreams.

The glittering threshold is scarcely passed,
When there gathers and wraps him round
A thick white twilight, sullen and vast,
In which there is neither form nor sound ;
The phantoms, the glory, vanish all,
With the dying voice of the waterfall.

Slow passes the darkness of that trance,
And the youth now faintly sees
Huge shadows and gushes of light that dance
On a rugged ceiling of unhewn trees,
And walls where the skins of beasts are hung,
And rifles glitter on antlers strung.

On a couch of shaggy skins he lies ;
As he strives to raise his head,
Hard-featured woodmen, with kindly eyes,
Come round him and smooth his furry bed,
And bid him rest, for the evening star
Is scarcely set and the day is far.

They had found at eve the dreaming one
By the base of that icy steep,
When over his stiffening limbs begun

The deadly slumber of frost to creep,
And they cherished the pale and breathless
 form,
Till the stagnant blood ran free and warm.

LIFE.

OH Life ! I breathe thee in the breeze,
I feel thee bounding in my veins,
I see thee in these stretching trees,
 These flowers, this still rock's mossy stains.

This stream of odours flowing by
From clover-field and clumps of pine,
This music, thrilling all the sky,
From all the morning birds, are thine.

Thou fill'st with joy this little one,
That leaps and shouts beside me here,
Where Isar's clay-white rivulets run
Through the dark woods like frightened deer.

Ah ! must thy mighty breath, that wakes
Insect and bird, and flower and tree,
From the low trodden dust, and makes
Their daily gladness, pass from me—

Pass, pulse by pulse, till o'er the ground
These limbs, now strong, shall creep with
pain,
And this fair world of sight and sound
Seem fading into night again?

The things, oh LIFE! thou quickenest, all
Strive upward toward the broad bright sky,
Upward and outward, and they fall
Back to earth's bosom when they die.

All that have borne the touch of death,
All that shall live, lie mingled there,
Beneath that veil of bloom and breath,
That living zone 'twixt earth and air.

There lies my chamber dark and still,
The atoms trampled by my feet,
There wait, to take the place I fill
In the sweet air and sunshine sweet.

Well, I have had my turn, have been
Raised from the darkness of the clod,
And for a glorious moment seen
The brightness of the skirts of God;

And knew the light within my breast,
Though wavering oftentimes and dim,

The power, the will, that never rest,
And cannot die, were all from him.

Dear child ! I know that thou wilt grieve
To see me taken from thy love,
Wilt seek my grave at Sabbath eve,
And weep, and scatter flowers above.

Thy little heart will soon be healed,
And being shall be bliss, till thou
To younger forms of life must yield
The place thou fill'st with beauty now.

When we descend to dust again,
Where will the final dwelling be
Of Thought and all its memories then,
My love for thee, and thine for me ?

THE FOUNTAIN.

FOUNTAIN, that springest on this grassy slope,
Thy quick cool murmur mingles pleasantly,
With the cool sound of breezes in the beach,
Above me in the noontide. Thou dost wear
No stain of thy dark birthplace ; gushing up
From the red mould and slimy roots of earth,
Thou flashest in the sun. The mountain air,

In winter, is not clearer, nor the dew
That shines on mountain blossom. Thus doth
God
Bring, from the dark and foul, the pure and
bright.

This tangled thicket on the bank above
Thy basin, how thy waters keep it green !
For thou dost feed the roots of the wild vine
That trails all over it, and to the twigs
Ties fast her clusters. There the spice-bush
lifts
Her leafy lances ; the viburnum there,
Paler of foliage, to the sun holds up
Her circlet of green berries. In and out
The chipping sparrow, in her coat of brown,
Steals silently, lest I should mark her nest.

Not such thou wert of yore, ere yet the axe
Had smitten the old woods. Then hoary
trunks
Of oak, and plane, and hickory, o'er thee hold
A mighty canopy. When April winds
Grew soft, the maple burst into a flush
Of scarlet flowers. The tulip-tree, high up,
Opened, in airs of June, her multitude
Of golden chalices to humming-birds
And silken-winged insects of the sky.

Frail wood-plants clustered round thy edge
in Spring.

The liverleaf put forth her sister blooms
Of faintest blue. Here the quick-footed wolf,
Passing to lap thy waters, crushed the flower
Of sanguinaria, from whose brittle stem
The red drops fell like blood. The deer, too,
left

Her delicate foot-print in the soft moist mould,
And on the fallen leaves. The slow-paced
bear,

In such a sultry summer noon as this,
Stopped at thy stream, and drank, and leaped
across.

But thou hast histories that stir the heart
With deeper feeling ; while I look on thee
They rise before me. I behold the scene
Hoary again with forests ; I behold
The Indian warrior, whom a hand unseen
Has smitten with his death-wound in the woods,
Creep slowly to thy well-known rivulet,
And slake his death-thirst. Hark, that quick
fierce cry

That rends the utter silence ; 'tis the whoop
Of battle, and a throng of savage men
With naked arms and faces stained like blood,

Fill the green wilderness ; the long bare arms
Are heaved aloft, bows twang and arrows
stream ;

Each makes a tree his shield, and every tree
Sends forth its arrow. Fierce the fight and
short,

As is the whirlwind. Soon the conquerors
And conquered vanish, and the dead remain
Mangled by tomahawks. The mighty woods
Are still again, the frightened bird comes back
And plumes her wings ; but thy sweet waters
run

Crimson with blood. Then, as the sun goes
down,

Amid the deepening twilight I descry
Figures of men that crouch and creep unheard,
And bear away the dead. The next day's
shower

Shall wash the tokens of the fight away.

I look again—a hunter's lodge is built,
With poles and boughs, beside thy crystal well,
While the meek autumn stains the woods with
gold,

And sheds his golden sunshine. To the door
The red man slowly drags the enormous bear
Slain in the chestnut thicket, or flings down

The deer from his strong shoulders. Shaggy
fells

Of wolf and cougar hang upon the walls,
And loud the black-eyed Indian maidens laugh,
That gather, from the rustling heaps of leaves,
The hickory's white nuts, and the dark fruit
That falls from the gray butternut's long boughs.

So centuries passed by, and still the woods
Blossomed in spring, and reddened when the
year

Grew chill, and glistened in the frozen rains
Of winter, till the white man swung the axe
Beside thee—signal of a mighty change.
Then all around was heard the crash of trees,
Trembling awhile and rushing to the ground,
The low of ox, and shouts of men who fired
The brushwood, or who tore the earth with
ploughs.

The grain sprang thick and tall, and hid in green
The blackened hill-side ; ranks of spiky maize
Rose like a host embattled ; the buckwheat
Whitened broad acres, sweetening with its
flowers

The August wind. White cottages were seen
With rose-trees at the windows ; barns from
which

Came loud and shrill the crowing of the cock ;
Pastures where rolled and neighed the lordly
horse,
And white flocks browsed and bleated. A rich
turf
Of grasses brought from far o'ercrept thy bank,
Spotted with the white clover. Blue-eyed girls
Brought pails and dipped them in thy crystal
pool ;
And children, ruddy-cheeked and flaxen-haired,
Gathered the glistening cowslip from thy edge.

Since then, what steps have trod thy border !

Here

On thy green bank, the woodman of the swamp
Has laid his axe, the reaper of the hill
His sickle, as they stooped to taste thy stream.
The sportsman, tired with wandering in the still
September noon, has bathed his heated brow
In thy cool current. Shouting boys, let loose
For a wild holiday, have quaintly shaped
Into a cup the folded linden leaf,
And dipped thy sliding crystal. From the wars
Returning, the plumed soldier by thy side
Has sat, and mused how pleasant 'twere to
dwell
In such a spot, and be as free as thou,

And move for no man's bidding more. At eve,
When thou wert crimson with the crimson sky,
Lovers have gazed upon thee, and have thought
Their mingled lives should flow as peacefully
And brightly as thy waters. Here the sage,
Gazing into thy self-replenished depth,
Has seen eternal order circumscribe
And bind the motions of eternal change,
And from the gushing of thy simple fount
Has reasoned to the mighty universe.

Is there no other change for thee, that lurks
Among the future ages? Will not man
Seek out strange arts to wither and deform
The pleasant landscape which thou makest
green?

Or shall the veins that feed thy constant stream
Be choked in middle earth, and flow no more
For ever, that the water-plants along
Thy channel perish, and the bird in vain
Alight to drink? Haply shall these green hills
Sink, with the lapse of years, into the gulf
Of ocean waters, and thy source be lost
Amidst the bitter brine? Or shall they rise,
Upheaved in broken cliffs and airy peaks,
Haunts of the eagle and the snake, and thou
Gush midway from the bare and barren steep?



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